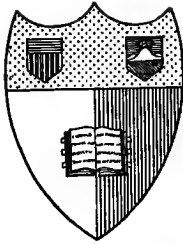


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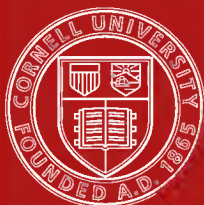
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A CONTRIBUTION TO
AN ESSEX DIALECT DICTIONARY

A CONTRIBUTION TO
AN ESSEX DIALECT
DICTIONARY

BY
EDWARD GEPP, M.A.
LATE VICAR OF HIGH EASTER, ESSEX



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INTRODUCTION

WHEN a Dialect Dictionary is constructed for a county or a district, the usual plan, I believe, is for a general editor to gather contributions from correspondents representing all parts of the area, and to compile what he gets. Here is one modest contribution for Essex, in advance, representing in a measure the dialect and colloquial speech of a small district. It is the outcome of seventeen years' observation in three contiguous parishes, High Easter, Felsted, and Little Dunmow, with slight additions from other neighbouring parishes. So far as it goes, the attempt may claim to represent Essex speech proper, the mid-county dialect, which is less tainted with alien forms than the speech of the northern, southern, and western parts, where East Anglian, Kent and London, and Midland dialects intrude. Moreover, my chief gathering ground is a region singularly remote from railways and main roads. For instance, in the parish of High Easter, with nineteen miles of road, there is not a bit of main road. The village is five miles from the nearest railway, and that an insignificant branch line. Railways and main road traffic, beyond a doubt, have made deadly havoc of the vernacular.

It is high time that some qualified person took our Essex dialect in hand, seriously and completely ; for no dabbling is of any use. The old speech, though it holds on tenaciously enough in corners, is generally shrinking under the influence of the Elementary School and of free intercommunication. It is deplorable that Essex should lack a dialect dictionary. Almost all the other counties appear to have been adequately dealt with. Essex sits forlorn. The two or three glossaries or vocabularies which have appeared from time to time are but scrappy things. Dialect is included in the scheme of the *Victoria History of the Counties of England*, but the Essex issue stopped some fifteen years ago, and hope of its completion is almost dead. Yet our generation will be without

excuse, if, possessing the *New English Dictionary*¹ and the *English Dialect Dictionary*,² it leaves the work undone. The great opportunity offered at the compiling of the latter was not taken. Essex figures but poorly in its pages, and our predecessors are much to blame for their lack of co-operation.

Books and notes on Essex dialect and Essex rustic life are sadly few. The best work by far is Mr. Bensusan's, in *A Countryside Chronicle*³ and *Father William*,⁴ and in his numerous short sketches contributed to various daily papers. *John Noakes and Mary Styles*⁵ supplies many dialect words, *John Lott's Alice*⁶ and *Essex Ballads*⁷ a good number, *Mehalah*⁸ and *Cunning Murrell*⁹ a few; but the matter in all these, except in the *Father William* series, is largely tinged with East Anglian and other alien speech. In Mr. Copping's "Gotty" books,¹⁰ the talk is more Cockney than Essex. Charnock's Glossary¹¹ is disappointing—a scrappy collection with the appearance of hasty compilation. Of two recent books, *A Floating Home*¹² presents the bargemen's dialect of the Essex coast with care and sympathy, but the appended glossary contains only about 120 words, and of these many are maritime words unknown inland, and in *Jinny the Carrier*,¹³ Mr. Zangwill, with his long experience of Essex life, reflects fairly correctly, if not copiously, the vernacular speech of East Essex. Other Essex books, so far as I know, contribute little or nothing to our subject; but Mr. Pickthall's *Lark-*

¹ Murray and others, 10 vols. Oxford University Press, 1888 (now near completion).

² Wright, 6 vols. Oxford University Press, 1898-1905.

³ S. L. Bensusan. Heinemann, 1907.

⁴ S. L. Bensusan. Arnold, 1912.

⁵ C. Clark. London, J. Russell Smith, 1839. [Reprinted, with additions to the glossary, by Prof. Skeat in *Nine Specimens of English Dialects*. English Dialect Society's publications, No. 76. Oxford University Press, 1895.]

⁶ F. C. Burmester. Grant Richards, 1901.

⁷ Mark Downe (C. E. Benham). Colchester, Benham, 1895.

⁸ S. Baring-Gould. Smith and Elder, 1880.

⁹ Arthur Morrison. Methuen, 1900.

¹⁰ A. E. Copping, *Gotty and the Guv'nor*. Grant Richards, 1907; *Gotty in Furrin Paris*. Chapman and Hall, 1908.

¹¹ R. S. Charnock, *A Glossary of the Essex Dialect*. Trubner, 1880.

¹² Ionides and Atkins. Chatto and Windus, 1918.

¹³ I. Zangwill. Heinemann, 1919.

meadow,¹ a Suffolk story, is useful for comparison, showing the affinity, and the differences, of Essex and East Anglian speech.

In compiling our present little dictionary care has been taken that no word be admitted until it has been certified by natives or residents as in use now or within their memory. The only exception to this is a very few obsolete words found in old documents. The examples are *bona fide* local ones, or have been made up in strict accordance with our ways of speech. The collection is, of course, very incomplete, but anything like a complete one is impossible for a single compiler. Fresh words are continually coming in, and words forgotten return capriciously to the mind (witness the Addenda herein, p. 73), and, except by wide and diligent co-operation, there is and can be no end. And collection cannot be hurried. It is one of the very few things left us in an age of hustle which we can, and must, do at leisure. Dialect speech is shy game, not to be hunted down as one hunts plants and birds and insects. It must be approached with cunning. It must not be obvious, save to one or two chosen folk, that one is on the hunt. Patience and an ever open ear alone avail; and, even so, many words do not come, and a treacherous memory loses others. But when they come, and are securely noted down, what noble prey! The good old English speech, passed out of literary use, supplanted by unworthy modern words, unrecognized by modern "education," but in its time the ordinary and literary speech of the country, the speech of ancient unsophisticated England.

Many people seem to regard dialect as mere uncouth speech, or as simply ludicrous. They can think thus no longer if they once perceive what dialect is, that genuine dialect words are as correct as any of current speech, and, as ancient survivals, are often far more interesting. Comical indeed it is in some of its manifestations—a fact which, I hope, the following pages sufficiently exhibit—but it cannot be despised. Though it be laughed at, it must have the respect which is its due.

¹ Marmaduke Pickthall. Chatto and Windus, 1912.

When we were children, we were not allowed to say *afeared*, or *drownded*, or to call a fork a *prong*, or a person a *party*. Such words were vulgar, so our parents and teachers told us. We rendered our instructors the obedience that Victorian times very properly exacted; but we now see that they did not know what they were talking about. Read the records of these and other such-like words in this little treatise, and see that they are high-class literary words, and that, if we are wickeder than our forefathers, we are to this extent wiser.

My attempt is to set down, as far as I am able, the dialect and colloquial speech of our little district. It is not claimed that anything here is peculiar to the district. Very few words are peculiar even to the county. Many are common to us and East Anglia. Many are more or less in general use all over the country. Yet it is most remarkable what shades of difference occur, in pronunciation at least, even in adjoining parishes. For instance, *shan't* appears here as *shaht*, there as *shait*, *shet*, *shay*, and so on, all in a small district. Where one of these forms is established, the others do not, or seldom, appear. And the vocabulary, generally, varies likewise. Words used commonly in one parish may be unknown, or seldom used, in the next parish, but turn up again a little further afield. There is no reckoning with dialect in the occurrence of its words. Elusive and sporadic, they are just like plants, which will have their particular soil; and who can say exactly in each case what that particular soil is? And so, no doubt, all over the county. It is a fact to bear in mind. In some of my friends who—a precious few—observe and appreciate our dialect, I notice the cramping idea that the speech of their own parish is the only true Essex dialect. Even of the supreme example, the talk of Father William and his associates, I have heard it said, "Oh, I don't call that Essex dialect. Our people don't talk like that." Essex dialect is, of course, the combination of all these local varying tongues; and when the Essex Dialect Dictionary appears, we shall at last have it in all its fullness and glory before our eyes.

The short Grammar which follows our little Dictionary has

grown out of an appendix, which was to accommodate such forms and uses as could not, without overloading and confusion, be included in a dictionary. It has grown into the clumsy, lengthy, yet inadequate thing that it is. But there it is. Dismally lacking scientific method and technical knowledge, it may yet serve as a skeleton for experts hereafter to pull to pieces and rearrange, and perhaps clothe with the proper kind of flesh.

My warmest thanks are due, and are hereby offered, to many kind friends who have interested themselves in my efforts and research, and have given me much and constant help; to Mr. John French and Mr. Alfred Skill, old inhabitants of Felsted, learned in all Felsted matters; to Mr. Hastings Worrin, of Bouchier's, Little Dunmow, and his amiable family, all no less enthusiastic and expert in local dialect; to the Rev. E. Iliff Robson, Vicar of Little Dunmow; to my sister, Miss Mary Gepp; to Mr. Alfred Hills, of Braintree; to Miss E. Vaughan, of Rayne; and to the Rev. Canon Tancock, Rector of Little Waltham, Mr. E. A. Peers, late of the Felsted School Staff, and Mr. S. L. Bensusan, close student and expert master of Essex dialect, for their kindness in reading the MS., and for much technical help in matters of philology and grammar; to Mrs. Kibblewhite, of the Oxford University Press, and Mr. A. E. Perry, of Dunmow, for the kindest help, sympathetic and material. And lastly I would express my immense indebtedness to those two incomparable works, *The New English Dictionary* and *The English Dialect Dictionary*, indispensable for research of this kind. Dr. Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar* (Macmillan, 1870), and Mr. C. T. Onions' *A Shakespeare Glossary* (Clarendon Press, 1911), have been continually helpful.

CHAFFIX, FELSTED,

February, 1920.

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DICTIONARY

Abbreviations:—D.D. *English Dialect Dictionary*.
N.E.D. *New English Dictionary*.

ABEAR: to endure. "That there pony never could abear a dicky." In literary use till the 13th century.¹

ACOLD: cold. Shakspeare, *King Lear*, III. iv. 57: "Tom's acold."¹

ACQUAINT (*intr.*): "I don't acquaint along o' she." This has ancient authority. Chaucer and Bunyan so use the word.

ACT: to play the fool. "Don't act," sometimes barbarously shortened to "do' ag," is a prohibition to a child or a troublesome person.

ADDLE: used with us in senses based on the old meaning of the word, to earn, gain, thrive. "That game 'on't addle" (pay, answer); "that'll addle (get on) now"; "that 'on't addle along o' this," etc.

ADRY: thirsty.¹

AFEARED: afraid. The word has high literary authority. It is used thirty times by Shakspeare, and generally in literature till the 18th century. It is the past participle of a compound of the O.E. verb *færan* (fear), to frighten, and is distinct from *afraid*, past participle of *affray*, also to frighten. The shortened form *feared* is also used in our dialect.¹

AFORE: before. It is the literary equal of *before*, which has now almost supplanted it.¹

AGIN: against. "I hain't got nothin' agin ye;" "she lives agin the pump;" "have ut ready agin I come back." *Again* in these senses was in literary use till the 17th century.¹

AH: yes. The local equivalent of *aye*, which is not used.

AIL (pronounced as *aisle*): an awn of corn. The word translated *mote* in Luke vi. 41 in our versions is rendered *e3le* in an O.E. 10th century text. Our labourers would understand *ail* in this passage better than *mote*, being painfully

¹ In these words the initial *a* is, in *abear*, *acold*, *afeared*, an O.E. intensive prefix; in *afore*, *agin*, *atween*, a worn-down O.E. preposition, *an* (on) (see Grammar, p. 57); in *along* it represents the O.E. preposition *and*, against; *adry* is a late word, not found before 1599, apparently formed on the analogy of the foregoing words. The etymology of *askew* is doubtful (N.E.D.).

- familiar with fragments of ails getting into their eyes in threshing.
- ALL ON : straight on, continually ; of work, " to keep all on," keep going ; or of reiteration in talk.
- ALL RIGHT : excellent. Used with emphasis on the *right*. " That's all right, that is," means " that's first rate." Lacking the emphasis, it has the ordinary meaning of satisfactory, etc.
- ALONG OF. See note, p. I, and Grammar (Prepositions).
- AN (and) : *if*. Used substantively. " There's t'many ifs an' ans" is said of a doubtful scheme or to a doubtful schemer. " Ifs and ands" is common in 17th century literature. This *an* is a weakened form of *and* in the sense of *if*. Cf. *IF*.
- ANDRER : a buffoon. An abbreviation of *merry-andrew*, of which the origin is not known. An old woman, asked why she did not dress in white in hot weather, replied, " Why, I should look like a andrer."
- ANGLE : vaguely, a spot, locality, direction. " A knowed 'twas somewheres about that angle."
- APPLE : a bulb or tuber. The secondary bulbs of leeks are called *apples*. Potatoes and onions are said to *apple* when they develop properly.
- APPLE-PIE : *Epilobium hirsutum*, the Great Willow-herb, so called from the smell of the flowers.
- ARBITRARY : (for arbitrary), disagreeable. Sometimes in the baffling form *opputary*, the stress being in both on the *a*. " I never could get on along o' she ; she's sech a opputary owd puss."
- ARGUFY : (1) to argue ; (2) to matter, signify. Cf. *MAGNIFY*.
- ARK. See *NOAH'S ARK*.
- ARRANT : errand. A dialect form dating from the 16th century.
- ARSE-END : the butt of a felled tree. *Arse* was a not impolite word in O.E. and M.E., nor until the 18th century.
- ARY : either. " That cost-es the same ary way."
- ASK : to publish banns of marriage. This, the historical word, recorded from the 15th century, was used of all church notices involving a claim or appeal, relating to strayed cattle, or to matters to which objection might be made. When the banns have been published three times, the parties are said to be *out-asked*.
- ASKEW (*prep.*) : across. " Hinder she come, askew that there fild." See note, p. I.
- ATHOUT (*prep.*) : without ; (*conj.*) unless. A corruption of *without* (q.v.).

- ATOMY**: an abbreviation of *anatomy*, a contemptuous term for an inconsiderable person. The shades of meaning seem to be (1) a skeleton, (2) a thin person, (3) a poor creature.
- ATWEEN**: between. See note, p. 1, and Grammar (Prepositions).

BACK: to "give back word" means to reverse an order given, to cancel an arrangement.

BACK OF: behind.

BAD: in old (18th century) parish account-books the phrase "bad to rate" seems to mean "in arrear."

BAGGING-HOOK: a sickle-shaped implement for hedge-trimming. To *bag* or *badge* from the 17th century means to cut corn, peas, etc. The etymology is not known.

BAIT: a meal or dish of food—"a bait o' taters."

BALE: to cut stacked hay and bind it in bales. A recent application of the word. Formerly *tie* or *bind* was used.

BALM: to smear with sticky stuff or dirt. "He's took an' got his fingers balmed all over a sticky." Wiclif, John ix. 6, has "he layde (or bawmede) the clay on his yzen." Adj. **BALMY**, dirty, e.g. of potatoes, dug out of wet heavy soil.

BANGLE: to knock about. "The wind's bangled them trees proper."

BANJE (bange): to drizzle. "Tain't rainin'; that's only banjin' a little."

BARN-WORK: formerly threshing work in the barn, now the name used for the threshing machine proper, apart from the engine and the elevator.

BAT: "as blue as a bat," "as blue as a bat's—." The full phrase is not used in polite talk. The colour refers to the animal's hinder parts.

BAZZEL: the slope of a cutting tool. A form of *bezel*. In literature the form *basil* occurs.

BEAT (*intr.*): to win (a game or race). "Which has beat?" means "which has won?"

BEAT OUT: to beat, puzzle. "That hully bet me out."

BECAUSE. See Grammar (Conjunctions).

BED: the phrase "to put to bed," to attend in childbirth, occurs commonly in old parish books, and is still used by old people.

BEDSTEADLE: a bedstead. Apparently a peculiar Essex form.

BEGGARED: in imprecation. "Thinks I, beggared if a don't knock they owd apples off, afore th' owd wasp-es git 'em."

BEIN' (being): since. See Grammar (Conjunctions).

BEMEAN: to degrade. "I ain't a goin' to bemean myself like that."

BEST : to get the better of. A modern use of dialect origin.

BESTOW : to bury.

BETTER : more. "Better nor a week, a mile," etc.

BETTERMOST : best. Like *uttermost*, it has literary authority.

BEVER : a labourer's luncheon. From O.F. *beivre*, *boivre*, now *boire*. A characteristic remark of a farmer, of an unusually mild year, was "that was that mild that year, they set to bever in the filds the day afore Christmas."

BEWLY : foolish.

BIG : pregnant. "What, they goin' to be married? Why, she ain't big yet." A sad reflection on local morals by an old gossip.

BILLY-O : "like billy-o" is an intensive adverbial phrase.

BIND : 1. to constipate. "I can't take milk; that does bind so." 2. Certain woods, hard to saw (e.g. willow), are said to "bind" in sawing; and (*intr.*) the saw "binds." Gravel and other road metal "bind" if they make a firm surface.

BINE : the stem of a climbing, prostrate, or limp plant. Of cultivated plants it seems to be used only of potatoes and hops. A dialect form of *bind*, recently (19th century) adopted in literary speech, as in *woodbine*.

BIRD-LIME : a euphemism for bird's dung. Perhaps a mere isolated freak.

BIT : "that's a bit" is a comment on an extraordinary story or circumstance.

BLADES : the leaves of root-plants, mangolds, turnips and the like, also extended to other plants such as potatoes, tomatoes, etc.

BLIND-MAN'S HOLIDAY : twilight, dusk.

BLOW (in the passive) : (1) of cattle, to swell after eating too much green food; (2) of a drain, to be choked.

BLUNDER : to hurry. "I thought I'd blunder round and do a bit o' work afore dark."

BOAR-THISTLE : *Carduus lanceolatus*, Spear-thistle.

BODGE : to botch, repair roughly.

BONE IN THE LEG : "I've got a bone in m' leg" is said to a child by way of refusing a request.

BONKER : a big thing. Perhaps a form of *bouncer* (N.E.D.)

BOP : to bob, pop, move suddenly. "Bop down, don't he'll see ye."

BOT : a parasitic maggot, such as infest animals: a chrysalis.

BOTTLE (*vb.*) : oats are said to bottle, when in cold weather the leaves do not expand, but cohere so as to give the top of the plant somewhat the appearance of a bottle.

BOUT : the length of a furrow and back; "to bout in" is to ridge up the furrows before sowing.

BOW : a curved furrow. See **RAINBOW**. So **BOWED**, curved.
BOWYANK : an obscure term used familiarly by labourers of their mates, apparently without any special meaning. *Bowy-yanks*, reported from N. Lincolnshire, means leather leggings (D.D.).

BOX : the funds of a Provident Society. To be "on the box" means to be drawing sick pay.

BOX : to go, hurry. "I wor a boxin' along."

BOYKIN : a little boy.

BRASH : small firewood. *Brash* (18th century) means small fragments of rock, ice, etc. (N.E.D.)

BRAWN : a boar-pig.

BREEDING-STONE : a lump of conglomerate, plum-pudding-stone." Perhaps so called from the idea that the pebbles are the progeny of the including substance.

BREW (broo) : the edge of a ditch opposite to the hedge. A form of *brow*.

BRIAR : a horse-fly. A form of *brye*, *breeze*, a gad-fly.

BRIEF : a letter taken round by an individual for charitable help. Probably a relic of the abolished system of Royal Briefs.

BROAD-WORK : field-work. *Broad* is an abbreviation of *abroad*, away from home.

BRUSH : (1) to trim a hedge, (2) (*intr.*) to hurry, be busy. "I must brush off now." "He ain't one to brush about no sense" means "he is an indolent or an ailing person."

BUCK : the body of a cart.

BUCK : to cut (halve) a hedge, either vertically, removing one side, which is called "splitting," or horizontally.

BUDGE (about) : to move quickly, bustle.

BULL'S NOON : midnight. Not explained in the dictionaries. Forby's explanation (*Vocabulary of East Anglia—1830*) is that the deep night is the time at which bulls habitually bellow.

BUMBY : a refuse pit.

BUMBĀ (stress on the *y*) : by and by.

BURNFIRE : a field-name. A northern (18th century) form of *bonfire* (bone-fire).

BUSH : a thorn. A thorn in the flesh is always a "bush."

BUSTLE : of birds, to dust themselves in the road or in dry soil.

BUZZY : muddle-headed.

CAD : the smallest pig in a litter. *Cad* is an abbreviation of *cadet*, a younger son, It. *capitetto*, diminutive from Lat. *caput*.

CADDLE : a mess, disorder. The housewife is "all in a caddle" in house-cleaning times. "Here's a caddle" is a comment on an untidy collection of things.

- CALLERBOT**: a young rook. An obscure word, not in the dictionaries thus. (? callow).
- CALL OVER**: to find fault with, abuse.
- CALVE (in)**: identical in meaning with "cave (in)," but a distinct word. Used of hedge-banks and the like.
- CAMMICK (cammock)**: (1) rest-harrow; (2) [in pl.] broken victuals.
- CANKER**: (1) the fruit of the dog-rose; (2) a fungoid disease of fruit-trees; (3) rust on metal.
- CAPPY**: of soil, hard on the surface. Cf. PAN.
- CARCY, CARZY**: a private roadway to a farm, a chase; a raised footway along a road liable to floods; the local form of *causeway*. *Causey* was the 14th century form (Fr. *chaussée*, O.F. *caucie*, L.L. *calciata*, trodden), later, through misapprehension, altered to *causeyway*, *causeway*. At High Easter a chase, as above, is so called. At Felsted is "Carzy Eend," a hamlet.
- CARF**: a notch cut, in felling a tree, to get a bough to fall in a given direction. O.E. and Teut., connected with *carve*.
- CARLICK (carlock)**: charlock (*Sinapis arvensis*).
- CARNEY**: to wheedle. A "carneying person" is a plausible, cajoling person.
- CAT**. See FIRE-CAT.
- CAVINGS**: the refuse of corn after the grain and chaff have been removed. The verb *cave*, which seems to be connected, through the form *chave*, with *chaff*, is only used with us in the term *caving-sieve*, a part of the threshing machine; and this appliance has come to be called the *cave*.
- CHAMBER** (pronounced *chaamber*): an upstairs bedroom. "I shan't want a room, on'y a chaamber;" "the chaambers is ever so much cowder than downstairs."
- CHANCE CHILD**: an illegitimate child.
- CHANCE TIMES**: sometimes.
- CHANK**: to chew. Apparently a variant of *champ*.
- CHAPEL (vb.)**: to be "chapped" is a recent Nonconformist term, adopted from the "churching" of women after childbirth in the Church of England. The proper term is to be "prayed for."
- CHAPELLER**: a dissenter.
- CHARLEY**: a wood-pigeon.
- CHASE, CHASEWAY**: a private road or lane leading to a farm or a field. D.D. derives *chase* from a Norman-French dialect *chasse* (*un petit chemin*). N.E.D. does not give this sense. *Chaseway* suggests *causeway* (q.v.). Perhaps *chasse* is a dialect form of *chaussée*.

ESSEX DIALECT DICTIONARY

- CHAT** : a small potato.
- CHICE** (jice, joice) : a small quantity, a taste. "Just a chice," of sugar in tea, salt with food, etc.
- CHILL** : to warm slightly, to take the chill off.
- CHINE**. See **SHEEN**.
- CHIVY-CHANK** : the chiff-chaff.
- CHOOSE** : (1) to wish, intend. "I don't choose you should" means "I forbid you to—"; (2) to wish for at a meal. "I don't choose any more."
- CHOP** : to exchange, barter. To "chop and change" occurs in literature as far back as 1485. Also *sb.*, exchange.
- CHOP ON** : to come upon suddenly, as of treading on a wasps' nest unawares.
- CHORE** : a job, piece of work. A form of *char*, *chare*, whence *charwoman*.
- CHRISTMAS** : holly and other Christmas greenery.
- CLACK** : the valve in the bucket of a pump.
- CLADGY** : heavy, doughy, of bread or pastry.
- CLANJANDERING** : a worrying noise. An obscure word, perhaps connected with *clamjamsfry* (D.D.), a rabble.
- CLIP** : a blow. "A clip o' the head."
- CLUNG, CLUNGY** : heavy, clayey. Used of bread or soil.
- CLUTTER** : to litter, put in disorder. "We're all cluttered up" is a common remark on washing day or in house-cleaning.
- COARSE** (*coorse*) : rough, stormy, of weather.
- COB** : a basket used in sowing.
- COB-IRON** : a fire-dog or andiron. A pair are placed at a convenient distance apart on the hearthstone, each consisting of an upright iron set in a horizontal bar forming a foot, and extending backwards. On these bars the wood is laid, and the pots are slung from above. The uprights are finished off at the top with "cobs" (knobs).
- COBBY** : of porridge or such-like messes, lumpy.
- CODDLER** : a good housewife, maker of nice things. "A rare lil coddler my lil girl is."
- CODGE** : to botch, bungle, of needlework, a garden, etc. Hence **CODGING**, clumsy, patchy. "Tain't n' good to set little codgin' bits" (of vegetables, etc.). Used also of general untidiness. "Codged up in corners" is said of the things in an ill-kept house.
- COLLIER** : the black aphid which infests beans, peas, and wheat, apparently so called from its colour.
- CONKER** : a horse chestnut. Children have a game called "conkers," which consists of matching a chosen chestnut against others by tying it on the end of a string and whacking a competitor until one breaks.

- CONSUME : used in imprecation. "Consume that boo-y! what's he up to?"
- CONTRARY (stress on the penultimate) : perverse, fractious.
- CONTRIVE : used as Consume, above.
- COP : (1) to throw. Used of any kind of throwing. A curious example is "I wonder that hadn't copped ye off," said of a mishap with a bicycle; (2) to strike. "I'll cop ye one;" (3) to catch. "You'll cop it," of a person who has done wrong. So *sb.*, a find. "He thought he'd got a cop." Cf. the slang *copper*, a policeman.
- COPPY : a coppice. There are "Coppy Lanes" in our district, presumably so called because they once adjoined woodland.
- COPWICK : a cobweb. Apparently an unauthorized form of *copweb*, the proper spelling (O.E. *coppe*, a spider).
- CORNY : horny, as are broad beans past their prime for cooking.
- COSSET : a lamb or other animal brought up by hand. Also, attributively, "a cosset pig, etc." Hence (*vb.*) to pet, cherish; often with *up* added.
- COTCHEL ; a small quantity. Properly a remnant of corn, but used generally, and often contemptuously, as in "What, a little cotchel like that?", of a niggardly gift.
- COTTY BAG : a gleaner's bag.
- COTTY MOLL (*sb.* and *vb.*) : perhaps a corruption of *molly coddle*.
- COUNT : most commonly used as a verb, to think, suppose. As a substantive it is used in the phrase "to make (take) count of," to consider, regard. One of our old men remarked "count 'm th' oldest in the parish." To the reply "No, you're not," two or three women being named, he answered "Ah, women; a don't take n' count o' they."
- COVERLID : a counterpane. A corrupt form of *coverlet* (O.F. *couvrelet*).
- COWD CHILL : a shivering fit, properly of ague, but now used of any chill; an odd pleonasm. N.E.D. does not notice it; D.D. records it without comment from a few eastern and east midland counties.
- COWL : a tub with two ears on the upper edge, used in brewing. The use of the word is now extended to other receptacles, e.g. a wheeled tank.
- COXALL (Coggeshall) (*adj.*) : foolish. A "Coxall job" means a foolish act. The Coggeshall people in past ages somehow acquired a reputation for Boeotian foolishness. Many stories are told to illustrate it, as of an old woman who, at the time of a flood, sent for a carpenter to pull down her staircase.
- CRAB : to find fault with, pick holes in, a scheme or proposal.

- CRACKER** : a bundle of small sere wood, such as is allowed to wood-cutters as their perquisite.
- CRAKE** : to boast.
- CRICKSEY, CRICKS** : bullace (*Prunus insititia*) ; an improved form with black fruits, domesticated in old gardens. The D.D. form is *cracks*.
- CROCK** : smut, soot, black dirt. Also *vb.*, to blacken with soot or dirt ; and *adj.*, CROCKY.
- CROFT** (pronounced *croat*) : a field. Nuttery Croft is one of many examples among our field names. Apparently it may be of any size or description. Of High Easter crofts twenty-six are arable, two grass.
- CRONE** : an old ewe.
- CROSSQOBBLE** (so reported) : an obscure word, perhaps a local invention ; to pester with questions, confuse.
- CROTCH** : a fork in a tree.
- CROW'S ONION** : a rank wild onion (*Allium vineale*) ; the "crow's garlic" of botanists.
- CUCKOO** : the Early Purple Orchis (*Orchis mascula*).
- CUE** : humour, temper, good or bad.
- CULCH** : rubbish.
- CUNNING** : knowing, clever. "A cunn'n' lil chap" means a clever child.
- CUP OF TEA** : "Ah, they're artful owd cups o' tea, they owd Jarmans."
- CYMBAL** : a small globular spiced cake, made for Ash Wednesday. N.E.D. connects it with *cymbal*, the musical instrument, and gives only two instances of its use, both from the U.S.A., and both recent ; but it appears to be of ancient use with us.
- DABBLE** : to glean in the wet.
- DADDLE** : to dawdle.
- DAG** : dew.
- DAGGING** : shooting, of a pain.
- DAME** : an appellation of old or elderly married women, now obsolete, but used in living memory.
- DAMP** : to rain slightly. "That just damp a little ; that don't really rain."
- DAZZ, DAZZLE** : to dawdle. Formed through Daddle above.
- DEAL** : (1) a large amount. "That'll take a deal o' beatin' " ; (2) dealing, a bargain.
- DENCHLY** : an obscure word, used of a burning saucepan—"that smell denchly." Perhaps it is a by-product of *den-shire*, to cut and burn turf, a syncopated form of *devonshire*, from the county from which the practice was first noted.

DENT: hurry. "She come along all in a dent."

DEVIL: a collarmaker's machine for teasing out wool, etc., for stuffing horse collars; a revolving drum set with teeth.

DICKY: a donkey. An eastern counties word of obscure origin, first noted in 1793. N.E.D. gives *dickass* as a dialect synonym of *jackass*.

DIFFER: difference. "Ye can't hardly tell the differ atween them two."

DIRECTLY MINUTE: immediately.

DISBEHAVE: to misbehave.

DISHWASHER: a wagtail.

DISSABIL: untidy or incomplete dress. Formed from Fr. *déshabillé*. "I'm all in my dissabil" is the housewife's apology for her appearance on washing or cleaning day.

DO: dealing, treatment. An old man, somewhat drunk, who got his hand stuck in a pump-spout, thus addressed the pump—"Now then, fair does, owd mate, no howd'n."

DO: to do work as a charwoman. "She's a doin' there this week." To "do for" is to look after a person or a family.

DO, DOES (pronounced *dooz*—the *oo* as in *soot*): conditional conjunctive use, if so; **DON'T**, if not. "You mustn't do that, doos you'll get wrong." "Stop that cryin'; don't I'll larn ye." *Did*, used in North Essex in the same way, is not, or is rarely, used with us. See also Grammar, p. 51.

DOB: to plant or arrange in patches. "I dunno as they don't do best dobbed about." A form of *dab*.

DODDY: small, tiny.

DOG-RAPPER: a church beadle or sexton. Dogs having ceased to be a common nuisance as intruders into church, dog-rapping has passed into oblivion, but the practice survived for a time for the discipline of children in church.

DOING: a scolding; a thrashing; a troublesome job.

DOKE: a dent, hollow, as in a metal surface, a bed or pillow, or in the top of a loaf. Depressions in unevenly dug ground are *dokes*.

DOLLOP: (1) a lump, a large piece, e.g. of dough or food; (2) **DOLLOPS**, a slattern, an inefficient person. "She's a poor dollops." For the *s* see Grammar, p. 62. Also *vb.*, of ungainly movement: "I see her a dollopin' along."

DOLOUR. See **DULLER**.

DOOL: a grass path across a ploughed field. "Dool hay" is hay cut from the edges of fields, and the term is extended to roadside hay. *Dool* properly in dialect seems to mean (1) a landmark; (2) a path between plots in a common field. O.E. *dál*, parallel to *déal*, division.

DORN: to adorn, set in order; with *out*, in the phrase "to

- dorn out a room," to arrange the furniture and contents.
- DOSSET : a small quantity, usually of articles of food.
- DOUBT : to fear, to expect something untoward. " I doubt we shall get wrong ; " " I doubt that's goin' to be wet. "
- DOW : a dove.
- DOWCID : a form of *deuced*.
- DRABBLE-TAILED : draggled-tailed ; used of untidy women.
- DRAFT : a drawing ; used also of a statue or image.
- DRAUGHT (pronounced *drawt*) : the shaft of a waggon or cart.
- DRAW : to exhaust, take the goodness from, as certain crops do from soil. So hot dishes are said to draw (take the polish and colour from) a table.
- DREENING : very wet ; of clothes, etc. DREEN, to rain fast. *Dreen* is a form of *drain*.
- DRIFTWAY : a driving-way through fields.
- DRIVE : to hustle, overwork. " I'm reg'lar drove up. "
- DROP : to fell (a tree).
- DRUM : a kettle with a broad bottom used by labourers at out-of-door meals.
- DUBEROUS : suspicious.
- DULLER : the noise of a crying child. A dialect form of *dolour* (grief), a mourning noise. The eastern counties preserve the historic pronunciation, which is universally retained in *colour*. Also *vb.*, DULLER.
- DUMB-SAUCY : (1) sulky ; (2) impudent.
- DUNT : to confuse with noise, to deafen. " That child's cryin's enough to dunt ye. "
- DURING (*sb.*) : " In the durin' of the week. "
- DUST : a small quantity, as of tea, sugar, etc., and extended to other substances, e.g. jam.
- DUSTMAN : in the phrase " the dustman's comin' , " said to a sleepy person. N.E.D. says that the idea is the act of rubbing one's eyes, as if dust were in them.
- DUTCH BARN : a barn with opensides, of upright timbers and roof only. It appears as a field name in the High Easter Tithe Survey of 1848, and modern examples are pretty common.
- EAT : intransitive use. Meat is said to " eat tender, " pastry to " eat short. " See Grammar, p. 52.
- ELEVENS(ES) : an intermediate meal of labourers in the field in haytime or harvest, or other times of special work. Cf. FOURSSES, SEVENSES.
- ENDWAY : a meeting of roads. *End* (pronounced *eend*) is frequent in names of hamlets, not necessarily in the extremities of the parish.

ENQUIRITION : enquiry.

ETCH : stubble. A form of *eddish*, of obscure origin. The earliest meaning is aftergrowth in fields.

ETEM : an item, article. "Them's my head etems" was said by a sick woman of her diet, perhaps with an imagined connexion with *eat*.

EVER, EVERLASTING : with *for* prefixed, very much or many; excessive. "There's for ever smuts about the room." "I've got for everlastin' marrers t'year." Potatoes may have "for ever bines."

EYE : to see. "He eyed it in his medder."

EYSEED : the seed of gromwell (*Lithospermum officinale*), which is put into the eye when a foreign substance has got in. The seed has a hard coat which becomes gummy in the moisture of the eye, and lays hold of the intruding matter. "I got a ail in my eye," a man said, "an I put a eyseed in, and next mornin' that laid on my eyelid." The plant is sometimes seen in cottage gardens, grown no doubt for this purpose, for it is no ornament and has no other use.

FAGGOT : a term of reproach. "A owd (young) faggot, that's what she is."

FAINT : of a smell, sickly ; of weather, close.

FAIR (*adv.*) : much, very, quite. "I'm fair bet" (beaten).

FALL : a yeaning of lambs, the total number born.

FALL OF THE LEAF : autumn.

FALL : to fell (a tree).

FANTEEG : fuss, excitement.

FARE : to seem, seem likely ; if one can give the word a meaning ; but it seems often to act as a mere extension of the verb with which it is connected. "That fare to make me kind o' giddy ;" "you don't fare to set them taters right ;" "that fare to take the skin off of ye." It is used sparingly and sporadically in our district, but is common apparently in the north of Essex, imported from East Anglia, which is its home.

FARE : a track(?). Obsolete and obscure. It occurs in the name of two contiguous fields, First and Second Fare Croft.

FAVOUR : countenance. "I thought I knew his favour." Older meanings, from which this is derived, are goodwill, attractiveness, appearance. Also (*vb.*), to resemble in features. "She favour the father more'n she doos the mother."

FEARED : abbreviation of *afeared*, q.v.

FEASY : peevish.

- FETTLE**: condition. "In fettle," "out of fettle," mean in or out of order; hence (*vb.*), to "fettle up," to put in order.
- FIDDLE** (about): to trifle. **FIDDLING** (*vbl. sb. and adj.*), trifling. The word appears to have acquired contemptuous use in literature in the 16th century.
- FIERCE**: (1) brisk, gay. Used of a cheerful child, even of an infant, or of a recovering invalid, or of an animal however inoffensive. A frog, from its bright colour, is "as fierce as a viper." (2) of fruit, ripening fast.
- FINNICK(S)**: a person, usually a woman, who puts on airs. "There's a proud finnicks for ye." Cf. **DOLLOPS**. So (*vb.*) **FINNICK**, to give oneself airs.
- FIRE-CAT**: a wooden contrivance formed of three rods joined in the middle and spreading upwards and downwards, used for keeping plates warm before the fire.
- FIT** (*adj. and adv.*): sufficient, enough. "'Tis wunnerf'l cowd; that's fit to flea ye;" "he laughed fit to bust hisself."
- FITT'N**. See **FOOTING**.
- FLACK**: to hurry, bustle, blunder about.
- FLACKETY**: disorderly, untidy, giddy, flighty.
- FLANDANGLE**: to romp. Perhaps a form of *fandangle* (*fandango*, a Spanish dance).
- FLANG**: of escaped horses or beasts, to kick about; of persons, to flounce.
- FLAT**: a flat-iron. A flat-hanger is a contrivance for holding an iron close to the fire.
- FLAVOUR**: to detect by taste. "I thought I flavoured ginger in it."
- FLEA**¹: in the expression "a flea in the ear," a scolding. "I sent he off with a flea in his ear."
- FLEA**²: to flay. "I was just a fleain' a hare when you come in." See example under **FIT**. This form is nearer than *flay* to the O.E. *fléan*.
- FLECK**: to peck, as birds do peas; to tear.
- FLEET**: shallow, of water or a receptacle. Also (*vb.*), to skim. "Flet milk" is skim milk. It is doubtful whether the substantive and verb are etymologically connected.
- FLIPGIBLETS**: tatters. "All to flipgiblets," all to pieces.
- FLITTERS**: small pieces, tatters.
- FLOWER**: any growing plant of the flower-garden, even grass. "How wunnerful green the flowers is this winter, same's the grass." See Grammar, p. 53.
- FLUSH**: watery, insipid; of vegetables, etc.
- FLY**: to throw. "I flew ut all over them plants."
- FOOTING**: footprints. Commonly pronounced *fitt'n*, *fit* being the customary pronunciation of *feet*.
- FORE**: front, earlier. "The fore part of the week."

FORECAST: to get ahead with work. Also (*sb.*), foresight, sense, profit. "There ain't much forecast in that there."

FOREIGN: "to go out foreign," to go abroad.

FOREIGNER: a stranger, a person from another county or district, often pronounced *thurriner*.

FORESPARE: to spare.

FOR EVER, FOR EVERLASTIN'. See **EVER**.

FORRA'D (forward): ahead, early. "To git forra'd" is to set to work in good time. "He don't get up very forra'd." It is used of early or well-advanced garden crops. To "go forra'd" is said of wind shifting in the direction of the hands of a clock. When it shifts in the reverse direction, it is said to "back."

FORWHY: why. See Grammar, p. 55.

FOURSES: a labourer's afternoon meal in the fields in haytime or harvest. Cf. **ELEVENSES**, **SEVENSES**.

FOWL: a cock. The male bird is always "the fowl."

FRAIL, FRAIL-BASKET: a labourer's tool-bag, slung over the shoulder.

FRAIL: a local pronunciation of *flail*.

FRENCH PAIGLE: Lung-wort (*Pulmonaria officinalis*). Certain plants for obscure reasons are designated "French." *Santolina Chamaecyparissus* is "French Lavender." So, generally, French beans, French marigold, French willow.

FRIGHTFUL: frightened.

FULSOME: of food, over-satisfying, filling.

FUR: far. See Grammar, p. 54.

FURNITUDE: furniture.

FURREL (ferule): the iron socket of a hoe, into which the handle is fitted.

GAMBLE: a corruption of *gambrel*, a wooden hanger for animals' carcasses.

GAMMICK (gammock): a frolic. And (*vb.*), to frolic.

GATHERING: a church collection; probably obsolete.

GATTRIDGE (gatteridge): (1) Dogwood (*Cornus sanguinea*), (2) Spindle-tree (*Euonymus europaeus*). From O.E. *gaiter*, *gatter*, goat's tree. The termination is obscure.

GAY: a picture in a book.

GEE: to get on. "Him and her doesn't gee together;" "I can't seem to gee along o' she."

GENTLEMAN: used with nice shades of meaning. "He's a gentleman" probably reflects a gratuity received. "Quite the gentleman" means a typical, rather grand, gentleman. "A gentleman's tool" is an amateur's tool. The word is used by labourers of their mates, as in "he's a gentleman now," meaning "he's retired from work."

- GID : a fit of giddiness. Properly a disease of sheep.
- GIG : a corn-dressing machine. Recently imported from South Cambridgeshire, where the term "dressing-gig" is in common use.
- GIRLKIN (galkin) : a little girl, a term of endearment.
- GLARE : to stare ; of a mere fixed look, without indignation or the like. The word is used of the stare of small children. "She did glare at we."
- GLEAMY (*adj.*) : used properly of April-like weather, showers and fitful sunshine ; with us more commonly of an overcast sky.
- GLEM : to stick together ; of any sticky mass. "That was all glemmed together" was said of a bandaged wound. Presumably a form of *clam* (*clem, clem*), of D.D.
- GLOUT : to scowl.
- GLUT : phlegm. "I keep a raisin' this here owd glut."
- GOB : a lump, e.g. of fat, dirt, etc.
- GOFFLE : to eat greedily.
- GOLL, GOLLY : hand. We say to children "Come and warm your gollies," and more picturesquely in the ancient jingle,
 "Warm gollies, warm.
 Boys gone to plough.
 If you want to warm gollies,
 Warm gollies now."
- GOLT (galled) : past participle of *gall*. "Golt fit" (feet) is a common trouble of labourers. The word has become a substantive : "I've got the golt."
- GOOD BOOK : the Bible.
- GO ON : to complain, scold, with reiteration.
- GOOSEGOG : a gooseberry. The Kent dialect has *snodgog*, a yewberry. Cf. HORSE-GOGGLE.
- GO UNDER : to undergo ; of an operation. *Undergo* is not commonly used.
- GORE : a muddy obstruction in a water-course.
- GRIP : a small ditch or trench.
- GRIZZLE : to whimper, complain.
- GROUND-TOAD : a toad. "As hard as a owd ground-toad," an old man said of himself. The hardness of the toad, and the force of "ground," are obscure.
- GROUTS : lees, dregs, sediment, as coffee grounds, tea-leaves, etc.
- GRUMBLE (*vb.*) : used of a pain not acute but persistent.
- GRUNS'L (groundsill) : the raised threshold of a cottage or room.
- GRUNSOPS (groundseps) : grounds of tea, etc. N.E.D. *groundsope*, D.D. *groundseps* (-sips).

GULCH: a heavy fall, bump. **GULCHING**, a downpour of rain—
“if that does start rainin’, there’ll be a gulchin’.”

GYE (jye, joy): the Corn Buttercup (*Ranunculus arvensis*).

HACKLE: dress. “To shift one’s hackle” is to change dress.

HAINISH: unpleasant, disagreeable; of persons, weather, etc.
Probably a form of *heinous* (Fr. *haineux*, *haine*, hatred).

HALF-BAPTIZE: to baptize privately, without the full rite.
The term is a scandalous modern invention. The first recorded instances are in Dickens, *Sketches by Boz*, ii., *Oliver Twist*, ch. ii., *Pickwick*, ch. xiii.

HAMES: the iron fittings to a horse’s collar, to which the traces are attached.

HAMMER: used in the phrase “the hammer of it,” meaning the long and short of it. “That’s about the hammer on it” concludes an argument or explanation.

HAND: (1) To make a signature is to “sign your hand.” (2) trouble. “I’ve had a hand with So-and-so.” (3) waste, havoc. “Them ducks has made a rare hand o’ the garden.” To “make a hand” seems properly to mean to make profit, then, conversely, to make a loss. All these have literary authority from the 16th century.

HANSEL (*haansel*): a deal. Properly a hawkker’s first deal in the day. “Give us a haansel” means “let’s make a deal.” As a verb the word means to make a first use, of clothes, utensils, and the like.

HANOVER: used in a variety of expressions. “A Hanover job” is a disagreeable job. “To play Hanover” is to do mischief. We also say “I wonder how the Hanover she done it,” and “go to Hanover.” The origin is no doubt the unpopularity of the Hanoverian succession, which was strongly resented in the Eastern Counties.

HAPPEN OF: to come upon, meet with, a person or thing, e.g. an accident. See Grammar, p. 57.

HAPS: perhaps.

HARASS (*intr*): to fuss. “He’s allus a harassin’ about.”

HARDBEAM: Hornbeam (*Carpinus Betulus*).

HARVEST: harvest work. A farmer gives, a labourer asks for, or takes, a “harvest” on contract.

HARVEST-BUG, an irritant insect, a mite which infests fields and gardens about harvest time.

HARVEST-HORN: a tin instrument, blown with dismal sound at harvest-time. It is now, happily, more or less a thing of the past.

HARVESTMAN: a long-legged spider.

- HATCH** : (1) the lower section of the opening of a barn, closing the space below the doors. A synonym of *leap* (q.v.). (2) In a High Easter field-name, "Shooter's Hatch." One of the meanings of the word is a bridle-gate. Apparently the field takes its name from its entrance, at which begins a bridle-way to woods.
- HAY-PLUM** : a small yellow plum, supposed to be ripe at hay-time.
- HAZARDABLE, HAZARDY** : hazardous.
- HAZLE** : to dry, crumble (*intr.*) ; of clothes, soil, etc.
- HEAD** : (1) [*sb.*] face. "I told him so to his head." (2) [*adj.*] chief, best. "That's the head trick, that is." Also in the superlative, **HEADEST**.
- HEALD** : to lean, overhang ; of a load or stack. The modern *heel*, to heel over, is a corruption of this.
- HELPED UP** : embarrassed, muddled. One is "helped up" with worrying children, or multifarious jobs. With a crowded cooking-grate the housewife is "helped up o' pots." D.D. takes it as an ironical use. Old people render it "hoped up," but *hope* is a dialect form of *help*.
- HEMP** : mischief. "Them sparrers has played hemp o' the peas." Apparently based on the idea of a gallows-rope. Hence in some parts a "hemp" is a troublesome person.
- HEMPSTALL** (pronounced "*hem's'l*"): An obscure field-name. Perhaps a form of *homestall*, or a memory of hemp-growing. *Hemp-croft* and *Hemp-land* are given by D.D. as terms for paddocks near the homestead where hemp was formerly grown.
- HENNEP** (? henhep) : a hen-coop. Perhaps from *hip*, the slope of a roof.
- HERE**. Redundant use. See Grammar, pp. 47, 55.
- HERO** : a troublesome child. "There's a little hee-ro."
- HILT** : the handle of a mattock or such tool.
- HIN** : *Chenopodium album*, White Goose-foot.
- HINDER** : yonder. "Hinder he goes."
- HOB** : a moth. Also **HOBHOWLET**.
- HOCK** : to string one hindleg of a dead rabbit, or hare, through the other, for convenience in carrying.
- HOCKEY** : the harvest-home supper. The supper custom has almost died out, and now *hockey* usually means the last load, which is decked with festive boughs. An Eastern Counties word, pronounced variously : in Suffolk *horkey*. Our *hockey* is the oldest form.
- HOD** : the receptacle or outer part of a seed or fruit—e.g., the shell of peas or beans, calyx of hazelnut and strawberry, outer shell of walnut, skin of gooseberry, etc. Also *vb.*, to remove these parts.

- HODMEDOD**: a snail. A reduplicated form of *dodman*, East Anglian for *snail*.
- HOG UP**: to dig roughly, fork up ground foul with weeds. A form of *hack* (?).
- HOGGET**: a year-old sheep.
- HOLD**: to be as regards health. Used in greeting, as the more usual *do*. Instead of "how do you do?" we say "how does Mus' So-and-so howd?"
- HOLY-MASS** (pronounced *Hollym's*): Chelmsford Fair, Nov. 12, is so called, from the association with All Saints' Day.
- HOMESTALL** (pronounced *homest'l*): a farmhouse with its premises.
- HONEYDEW**: a sweet sticky substance on plants, an excretion of aphides, popularly supposed to be a form of dew.
- HOP**: to limp.
- HOPE**: a piece of enclosed land. Obsolete, but occurring in an old field-name, "Little Brick Hopes." Cf. **HOPPET**.
- HOPPET**: a small meadow. Perhaps a diminutive of *hope* (q.v.). A local explanation is *hog-pit*, for which absurdity cf. **PIGHTLE** (pig-tail).
- HORSE-GOGGLE** (hoss-) *Prunus domestica*, the wild plum, domesticated and improved in cottage gardens. The dictionaries render it *horse-gog*, *horse-jag*, which perhaps indicates its origin, *jag*, a thorn. Cf. **GOOSEGOG**.
- HOT**: to heat. With *up*.
- HOUSELS**: household goods.
- HOVEL**: an outhouse. This is the word's first meaning, with no sense of squalor.
- HOWSOEVER**. See Grammar, p. 54.
- HUFF, HUFFER**: a small cake of new-baked bread.
- HULK**: to disembowel an animal for cooking.
- HULL**¹: the shell or husk of peas, beans, or corn, the calyx or receptacle of fruits. Our usual word is *hod* (q.v.).
- HULL**²: holly. A rare word, whose etymological affinity is undetermined. N.E.D. gives three instances, all 16th century, of which two are Tusser's.
- HULL**³: whole.
- HULLO YER**: used, with *like*, adverbially, as in "she come runnin' along like hullo yer."
- HULLY**: wholly.
- HULVE** (pronounced *oolve*, *woolve*): a water-channel under a gateway. Perhaps from M.E. *whelven*, to overturn. "The wind . . . overwhelveth the see," Chaucer, *Boethius* II. m. 3. 17. (Skeat, *Student's Chaucer*).
- HUMOURY**: affected with sores or a rash.

HUMP: a great amount. "To think a hump of" is to think much of.

HUSSEY (pronounced *huzzey*): an outrageous or ill-conditioned woman.

HUTCH: a wooden chest.

IF: "you're ollus iff in an' ahrin" is said to a vacillating person. Cf. AN.

ILLCONVENIENCE, ILLCONVENIENT. These are not corruptions of the usual forms with prefix *in-*. They have respectable literary authority, 17th and 18th centuries.

IMAGE: an ornament in a room, of whatever kind, as on a mantelpiece.

INDEPENDENT: of no occupation. "An independent policeman" means a retired policeman.

INDIFFERENT: disagreeable. "She spoke very indifferent" means "she was rude."

INQUIRATION: inquiry.

INVITE: an invitation. The stress is on the *in*. A colloquialism which had literary use from the 17th century to the 19th.

IVERY: ivy. A corruption of *ivy*. It has only dialect use, but is probably ancient.

JAA: jaw.

JACK BAT: a bat, male or female.

JACK UP: to give up, abandon, a job, etc.

JACOB: a frog. An East Anglian and Essex term.

JAGGER: to talk noisily or scoldingly. "She kep' on a jaggerin' at me proper."

JENNETIN: an early apple. Probably from Fr. *Jeannet*, *Jeanneton*, diminutives of *Jean*. Fr. *pomme de Saint Jean* (Weekley, *The Romance of Words*—1912). The rendering *juneating* is a mere conjecture of the 17th century.

JENNY: a queen in a pack of cards.

JERRY-SHOP: a small beer-house. Supposed to be an abbreviation of *Tom-and-Jerry-shop*, "Tom and Jerry" being some kind of mixed liquor (N.E.D.).

JET: a baler with a long wooden handle.

JICE. See CHICE.

JINGLE: a form of SHINGLE (q.v.).

JOLLY: a mild expletive. "My jolly," "by jolly," etc.

JONNOCK: fair, honest, straightforward. Rare, if not extinct.

¹ The word has many forms in different parts of the country. In *John Noakes and Mary Styles*¹ it appears as *ginnick*, and is applied to a table, steady.

¹ See Introduction, p. vi.

JOUNCE : to jolt, to shake (as dry goods in a measure). Also as *sb.*

JUDDER : to rattle.

JYE, JOY. See **GYE**.

KILNWARE : faggots.

KILTER : a tool, implement ; usually a scythe, sometimes a plough. *Vb.* **KILTER UP**, to repair an implement, or anything.

KILTERMENT : used like *kilter*, but with wider application. Personal effects, fittings, e.g. the bottles in a medicine chest, are *kilterments*.

KIND : in good condition ; of a sample of corn, etc. This may be the sense in " the kindly fruits of the earth " in the Litany. See **N.E.D.**

KING : in the phrase " a king to." " She's a king to what she was," said of a recovering invalid.

KING-COB : the Creeping Buttercup, a pest in damp soil, also known as " pickpocket."

KING-CUP : Marsh Marigold.

KNEED-HOLLY : Butcher's Broom (*Ruscus aculeatus*). Properly *knee-holly*, an ancient term, recorded from the 10th century. The explanation is unknown.

LADY : (1) used as a substitute for " Mrs.," of untitled old or elderly ladies of standing. Sometimes used by working people of one of themselves. (2) Lady Day ; " I'll pay ye come Lady."

LADY'S TWO-SHOES : Bird's-foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*).

LARD : to sweat ; of a horse out of condition. " Th' owd mare come a lardin' along." So Falstaff (1 Henry IV, II. ii. 120) " lards the lean earth as he walks along."

LARGESS : a gratuity expected by labourers at harvest and shooting time.

LAY, LEY : a field. Of High Easter " lays " eleven are arable, eight grass. *Lay* and *ley* are forms of O.E. *lêah*, a tract of open ground, ordinarily grass.

LAY : " clover lay " means a clover field after the crop is off. It represents (?) O.E. *lêge*, connected with the verbs *lay* and *lie*, land *laid* down for grass.

LAYS : perhaps the local form of *lease*, *leaze*, O.E. *lêas*, pasture. " Barnston Lays " is now a wood. Adjoining it are rough pastures named Great Ley and Long Ley. There is much confusion of these three words.

LAY. For the relation of *lay* and *lie* see the Grammar, p. 50. *Tr.* To " lay a thing to " a person is to hold him to blame for it ; so to " lay at So-and-so's door." " Laid out," prepared. " I was laid out t'goo to Chenshford," means " I had

- arranged." *Tr.* and *intr.*, to bet. "I lay (a penny) he never done it." *Intr.* "To lay forrad" is to get up early; "to lay rough" is to sleep out of doors; "to lay by the wall" is used of a corpse lying in a house awaiting burial.
- LEACH: moist soil. "That stuff'll make a good leach;" said of a garden well mulched.
- LEAF (out): to shoot, put out leaves.
- LEAP: the movable barrier which closes the opening below barn-doors.
- LEARN: to teach. The word in this sense retained its literary use till well into the 19th century, and is familiar to us from Bible passages. In dialect often used with menace—"I'll larn ye."
- LEAVE BE: to let be, leave alone.
- LEER: to scowl, frown, look angry.
- LEVENS. See ELEVENSES.
- LIBERTY: "to give a woman her liberty" means to church her after childbirth. It is incorrect to go out till this is done. There appears to be no reason other than rigid custom, based probably on ancient superstition.
- LIEF: willingly, as soon, rather. "I'd as lief go on the land" means "I would just as soon—"; "I'd as lief you come" often means "I would rather you came."
- LIGHTSOME: well lighted; "the Chu'ch was more lightsome last Sunday." A newly decorated room is "lightsome." Also used of a basket, a material, etc., of light texture.
- LIKE: likely. "Very like I shall." This has literary authority to the 16th century. See Grammar, p. 54.
- LIMB: a mischievous person, by ellipsis for "limb of Satan." "To play limb" with a thing is to make havoc of it.
- LIMMER: a form of *limber*, in the sense of limp, soft; used of pastry not baked crisp, of linen not properly starched, and the like.
- LINES: a documentary certificate; "marriage lines."
- LINGER: to long, wish greatly, with *for* or *after*; "I do linger for him to get better."
- LIST¹: the bottom layer of dough in ill-baked bread.
- LIST²: quick, sharp; "list o' hearin'."
- LIVING (?): a local apple name.
- LOOKER: a bailiff.
- LORD OF THE HARVEST: the leading scytheman, responsible to the employer for paying the men, serving out beer, and general control. Now but a memory.
- LOUSE: used of various insects that infest crops, e.g. the black aphid of wheat.
- LOVE: soapsuds.

- LUMPING WEIGHT : full weight, clearly turning the scale.
- LUSH, LUSHY : loose ; used of soil ; also of the growing crop, loose in the soil, not well rooted.
- MACK'L MINT : Spearmint (*Mentha viridis*). Gerard (*Herbal*, 2nd Edn., 1633) gives "mackerel mint" as one of its names.
- MAGGOT : a fancy, craze.
- MAGGOTY : irritable, peevish.
- MAGNIFY : matter, signify. "That don't magnify." A cant use, first recorded from Steele, *The Spectator* (1712). Cf. ARGUFY.
- MAKE : in the expression "I'on't nuther meddle nor make," I won't interfere, have anything to do with.
- MAN : husband. "My man," my husband. Cf. WOMAN.
- MANNICK : to trifle.
- MASTER : (1) applied as a title of respect to small farmers or tradesmen, and old labourers. The universal *Mr.* (*Muster*) is unfortunately taking its place. (2) A great, striking, thing. "That's a master, that is," "that's all your master(s)." Also *adj.*, great, striking—"a master cabbage."
- MASTER WILLIAM : an owl. Also a ram.
- MAULED : tired, overworked.
- MAWKIN : a scarecrow.
- MAWKS : an untidy, slatternly woman.
- MAWTHER : a girl, mostly a big awkward one. An East Anglian word, uncommon with us.
- MAY FAIR : Chelmsford Fair, May 12th. "He's older'n me b' May Fair t' Harler (Harlow) Town Fair (Nov. 28th)."
- MAYWEED : *Anthemis Cotula*, Stinking Mayweed. Properly *maythe-weed*, *maythe* being an ancient name of the plant. Its acrid juice raises blisters on harvesters' hands, and seems sometimes to cause blood-poisoning. The term is sometimes applied to *King-cob* (q.v.).
- MAZED : bewildered. From an old verb *maze*, whence the current *amaze*.
- MEETINGER (*meet'ner*) : a dissenter.
- MEND : to manure (of land). Whence MENDMENT, manuring.
- MERCURY (*marcry*) : the plant Good King Henry (*Chenopodium Bonus-Henricus*).
- MESS : a dish of cooked food ; "a mess o' peas," etc.
- MICHAELMAS : a mistake, muddle.
- MIDGET : a midge, locally known as *thunder-bug* (q.v.).
- MIDGY : careful, saving.
- MIDSTRY : the middle portion of a barn which has two front entrances.

- MILLER: in the phrase "to put the miller's eye out," to overdo the water in a mixture. The explanation is said (D.D. *Miller* 2.) to be the stoppage of the "mill-eye" by putting in too much grain.
- MIND: to remember; "I mind when that happened."
- MINE: my house. See Grammar (Pronouns).
- MINGY: stingy.
- MISBEHOLDEN, MISBEHOLDING: ill-natured.
- MISCALL: to abuse, call bad names.
- MISCHIEFUL: mischievous.
- MISKY: foggy. A dialect form of *misty*.
- MISS: Mrs.; prefixed to the name of married women. A U.S. use; Harris (*Uncle Remus*, ch. xxii): "W'en ole man Rabbit say 'scoot,' dey scooted, en w'en ole Miss Rabbit say 'scat,' dey scatted."
- MODGE: a form of MOOCH (q.v.).
- MOISTMENT: moisture.
- MOKEY: a name of the Evil One. "I couldn't tell ye, not if I was owd Mokey hisself." Perhaps a misconception of Bogey.
- MOMMOCK: a morsel, lump, especially of food. The word (mammock) is used by Florio (Montaigne, *Essays* II. iii and xii).
- MOOCH: to loaf, in general, and uncomplimentarily used of courting.
- MOOCHER: an idler, a tramp.
- MORT: a large quantity; an East Anglian word, uncommon with us.
- MOSEY: of animals, (1) in poor condition; (2) furry. Probably in both a form of *mossy*; *moss*, a swamp; *mossy*, flabby, sickly.
- MOST: a local abbreviation of *almost*. "Mos' partly" is a curious combination; "I'm mos' partly sure."
- MOTHERY: of bread or flour, stale, musty. *Mother*, in an obscure sense, means scum, mould.
- MOULDS (*mowlds*): soil.
- MOULDY (*mowldy*): of soil, light, crumbly.
- MOW: a heap of unthreshed corn in a barn.
- MUCH: great. Only in a High Easter field-name, "Much Field." In place-names, Much (Dunmow, Canfield, Waltham, etc.), usual in old documents, is now obsolete.
- MUCK: disparagingly used, chiefly of children—"a young muck."
- MUCK (about): to idle.
- MUDDLE (about): (1) to do a little work; (2) to bustle.
- MUDDLESOME: of weather, close, tiring.

MUG : a jug. The oldest sense of *mug* is the general one of a vessel for liquids.

MULLICKY : foggy.

MUNGHY : of weather, close and damp; of soil, wet, sticky.

NANNICK : to play idly; to fidget.

NARY ONE : not any (ne'er a one). Cf. **ARY**.

NAWN : a corruption of *nothing*.

NEIGHBOUR : to gossip.

NEVVY : nephew.

NICE : particular. "We 'on't be nice about that."

NICELY : well, in good health. "I'm nicely, thank ye."

NICK : to pilfer.

NICKLED : entangled. Laid corn is said to be "nickled up."

NIDGET : apparently a variant of *midget*, *midge*.

NIGH : near, nearly. More usual than *near*; "nigh bed-time," "nigh fower score," "nigh as fur agin," "the nighest way," "that's nigher that way."

NINE-EYES : the lamprey.

NOAH'S ARK : an appearance of clouds, widening upwards from the horizon, and so somewhat boat-shaped, as in an approaching storm.

NOHOW : out of order, out of condition or health. "I ain't nohow," I am ill.

NOR : than—"this here's better nor yourn." See Grammar, p. 57.

NO SENSE. See **SENSE**.

NOSY : interfering, inquisitive.

NOTELESS : unnoticing, unconscious. Used of failing old people, and of persons and animals suffering from shock, e.g. from lightning.

NUNTY : ill-tempered.

NUTTERY : a hazel-tree. "Nuttery Croft (Croft)" is a High Easter field-name.

NYE : a brood or flight of pheasants.

OAKERY : an oak (?). Only in the name of a now vanished High Easter field, "Oakery Grove." Cf. **NUTTERY** and **IVERY**.

OAKUM : apparently a local corruption of Orpine (*Sedum Telephium*).

OBEDIENCE : a bow or curtsey. "I've allus learned her to make her obedience."

ODNY : ordinary. A curious abbreviation.

- OFFARD** (offward) : the off side of a waggon. Cf. **TOWARD**, the near side.
- OLD** : used in curious random fashion ; it expresses familiarity as an epithet of personal names, owd Charley, owd Bob, and the like ; or resentment, disapprobation, depreciation, as in " they owd sparrers has played hemp o' my peas ; " often a mere otiose epithet—" I see they owd boo-ys a-chasin' a owd cat up and down th' owd hopput proper." Absurd combinations result : " Mother's got another owd baby ; that's a owd girl this time ; " " look at that there owd pup ; " " there's two or three neest-es full o' little owd young uns in that owd bush." This promiscuous use is modern and vulgar, developed from the word's intensive use in old writers, as in " yonder's old coil at home " (Shakspeare, *Merchant of Venice* IV. ii. 15).
- OLD CHRISTMAS** : Christmas according to the old style, Jan. 6th ; **OLD MICHAELMAS**, Oct. 11th.
- OLD-FASHIONED** : knowing, cunning. But the meanings are vague. " He looked at me kinder owd-fashioned like," may mean cunningly, suspiciously, threateningly, and what-not.
- OLD MAN** : Southernwood (*Artemisia Abrotanum*).
- OLD MOKEY**. See **MOKEY**.
- OLD UN** : the devil.
- OLD WILL** : an owl. Also Old Will Hicks. Hick, a form of Richard, has the meaning of a booby.
- OLLUS** : always.
- ONLY**. See Grammar, p. 56.
- ONSENSED** (unsensed) : stunned, rendered unconscious.
- ONST** (pronounced *wunst*) : once. " To onst," at once.
- ONWARDS** : money paid in advance of pay due. *Onward* is used in the sense of " on account " in literature in the 15th and 16th centuries.
- OOLVE**. See **HULVE**.
- OPENARSE** : the fruit of the medlar.
- OPPUTARY**. See **ARBITARY**.
- ORNARY** (ordinary) : of poor quality ; " a ornary sample," and so on.
- OURN** : our house. See Grammar (Pronouns).
- OUT-ASK**. See **ASK**.
- OVERSEEN** : mistaken. " I wonder they was so overseen " means " I am surprised that they hadn't more judgment." The verb means to overlook what is right, to lack judgment.
- PAD, PADDLE** : the same as **HUFF** (q.v.).
- PADDY** : a hand. Used chiefly of children's hands, and substituted for " gollies " in the rhyme quoted under **GOLLY**.

- PAIGLE : the cowslip. Pronounced *peggle*. "'s yaller's a peggle" is said of sickly plants.
- PAIR : a set, not necessarily a couple—"a pair (chest) of drawers," "a pair of steps," "a pair of stairs." So, in literature, a pair of gallows, harness, organs, virginals, etc.
- PAMMENT : a paving-brick. A "fire-pamment" is a fire-brick. A M.E. form of *pavement*.
- PAN : hard clay subsoil caused by continuous ploughing at the same depth. Used also of the surface soil when it is in the condition called "cappy" (q.v.). "Little Pan Field" is a High Easter field-name, whatever *pan* means there.
- PANNEL : a pad used as a rough saddle.
- PARBOILED : wet through, from rain or from work in water.
- PARCEL (pronounced *passel*) : a quantity. "Our roblum's well lad; that's got a nice passel o' fruit on t' year." The word is used of any and every thing—"I took a good passel o' salts," "a passel o' bees," etc. So in literature, "a great persell of bloud" (16th century), "the parcel of ground" (John iv. 5); the word is used of fire, weather, all sorts of things. Comically, Smollett (*Peregrine Pickle*, ch. xxxi) has "he threw him out of the window among a parcel of hogs."
- PARLOUR : a ground-floor bedroom, the best bedroom in a cottage.
- PAY ON : to punish, chastise.
- PAYSAN : a small early apple, one of the kinds known as harvest apples. There are green paysans and striped paysans. (?) Fr. *paysan*.
- PEAKY : looking ill.
- PED : a basket or pannier; hence *pedlar*.
- PEEK : to peep. "Them sids (seeds) is just a peekin' up."
- PEEL : a baker's shovel.
- PEPPER AND SALT : to sprinkle hay on a stack, as it rises, to level it.
- PERAMBLE : a rambling statement, unnecessary talk. Probably for *preamble* (Lat. *præambulum*), a prelude.
- PERISHED : suffering severely; "perished o' cowl," miserably cold.
- PERRY : a pear tree. Only in field-names. Perry Field is common.
- PERSAIVANCE : sense, intelligence; also of feeling in a limb—"he ain't got persaivance to lift his leg." *Persaive* is a 16th century dialect form of *perceive*.
- PETER-GRIEVED : sad, put out. PETER-GRIEVOUS (*sb.*), a complaining, peevish person. "A rare owd Peter-grievous, he is."

- PEZZICK : to run fast ; and *sb.* speed. " I see the owd fox goo a pezzickin' acrost the field."
- PICKPOCKET. See KING-COB.
- PIGHTLE : a small grass field near a house. This is the east country form. In the north it is *pikle*.
- PIN-CUSHION : the Field Scabious (*Knautia arvensis*).
- PINDLY : of plants, weakly.
- PINGLE : to pick food about for lack of appetite. " She didn't eat nothin', on'y just pingled it over." *Adj.* PINGLY.
- PINPATCH : a periwinkle.
- PITCH : stature. " I thought 'twas about his pitch."
- PLAYSTALL (pronounced *plaaas'l*), a village playground. Sometimes " *Plaaas'l Lay*."
- PLEG : a plague, nuisance, trouble. And *vb.* " I'm often plegged t' read what's wrote."
- POACH : to trample into mud. " Poachin' in and out," of traffic between the house and the dirty yard.
- POD : a boring-tool for well sinking. An old form of *pad*, a socket for a movable tool.
- POISON : to make dirty or disagreeable. " Poisoned o' dirt ; " " the soup's poisoned o' salt ; " " we're 'most poisoned o' rats." Used even of harmless or profitable things—" that there tree's poisoned o' apples."
- POP : a familiar equivalent of *go, come*. " I'll just pop in and see ye." In literary use from the 16th century.
- POURING : used in strange variety. " The hunters come a pourin' down the road ; " " them seeds is comin' up pourin' ; " " he's savin' money pourin' ; " " I've got the jaasache pourin' ; " " that do stink pourin'," and so on.
- POX : an imprecation or expression of disgust. " Pox take it ; " " pox, they owd cats ooll set on my sids." And *vb.* " poxed if a don't do ut."
- PRAY : an expression of alarm. " Oh, pray, you did frighten me."
- PREACH : to chatter, gossip. Hence the barbarous modern noun PREACHATION.
- PRETTY : (1) the ornamented part of a wine-glass or tumbler. " Fill it up to the pretty." (2) *adv.* intensive. " In the dark I spraaled over them stones pretty." See Grammar (Adjectives).
- PRICKED : of jam, beer, etc., fermented, sour.
- PRICKER : a prickle.
- PRIM : Privet (*Ligustrum vulgare*). First record Tusser, *Husb.* 33 (1573). Apparently an abbreviated form of *primprint*, an earlier word. The origin is unknown.
- PRONG : a table-fork. Now held to be vulgar, but it has excellent authority from the end of the 15th century.

PROPER : (1) excellent, fine ; " a proper sight o' taters." *Adv.* very, exceedingly ; " a proper wet day." (2) sane ; " he ain't quite proper."

PRULLICK (about) : used of servant girls on holiday ; to play about, enjoy freedom, show off fine clothes, and the like.

PRUTTOCK (about) : as the last, but in a general sense only. Perhaps a form of D.D. *pratic*, a trick, Fr. *pratique*.

PRY : the Small-leaved Lime (*Tilia parvifolia*).

PRY : to prize (prise), force open with a lever.

PUCKER : flurry, agitation. " She *was* in a pucker."

PUDD'N-SPOILER : a long sermon ; used with reference to the Sunday dinner. " Did you like the sermon ? " " Yes, I did ; but that was a bit of a pudd'n-spoiler." D.D. apparently lacks this notable word.

PUGGLE : to poke about.

PUGGY : moist, of perspiring hands. *Vb.* PUG, to paw about.

PULK (pronounced *poolk*) : a small dirty pool. It seems to be used with us commonly for a refuse-hole ; but properly it has no sense of dirt, being probably a diminutive of O.E. *þól*, a pool.

PULL : to summons, prosecute.

PULL-POKER, a dragon-fly.

PUMMY : pulp, a wet mass—" all of a pummy." *Adj.* wet, spongy, of soft gravel, etc. From *pomace* (16th century), apple-pulp, and other wet soft substances.

PUSH : a small boil or gathering.

PUSK (?) : to hit. An old man, describing his dealings with a " wasp-es nest," said " A den't pusk at 'em, y' know."

PUSS : a depreciatory term applied to an objectionable woman or girl. See **ARBITRARY**.

PUT ABOUT : worried, in discomfort.

PUT DOWN : of meat, to salt, cure ; of fruit, to preserve. You may " put down " a pig, or fruit, or any garden produce.

QUACKLE : to choke.

QUARTERS : the spaces between the horse-track and the ruts in a road, and between the ruts (rakes) and the edges. " To quarter " formerly meant to drive along the quarters, avoiding the ruts. Arthur Young, *Letters to People* I. 445 (1767), speaks of quarters a yard high. Now prominent quarters being a thing of the past, " to quarter " means to draw aside to pass another vehicle.

QUEER : ill ; also, rather crazy, eccentric.

QUIFF : (1) a trick, dodge, knack ; " I knowed the quiff on't " ; (2) a queer, extraordinary thing ; (3) a whiff ; " a quiff o' bacca."

QUILT : to thrash. QUILTING, a thrashing.

RADDLE (in) : to work sticks horizontally into a hedge or fence, to strengthen it.

RAINBOW : a ploughing term. A field ploughed in curves (bows), to suit a curving outline, is said to be "ploughed rainbow." Hence some fields have the name Rainbow Field.

RAINY-BUG : a small black beetle said to appear before or in rainy weather.

RAKE : a wheel-rut. Cf. QUARTER.

RANDAN : a disorderly noise.

RANDY : disorderly.

RANTIPOLE : to romp.

RAP AND REND : to grab, lay hands on. "I've giv ye all I could rap and rend." *Rap* is an old word meaning to seize.

RASTLE : to rake (a fire).

RAVISH : to eat greedily or voraciously.

RAW : cold ; of water fresh from the well. So "raw-cold," a "raw morning," of damp searching cold.

RECTIFY : to renovate, clothing, etc.

REDDY : clear. This and *rid* are apparently distinct, though alike in meaning and use. With us "to get redly" is more usual than "to get rid."

RENCH : to rinse ; used with *out*.

RENDER : to melt down (fat).

RETCH : to reach. See Grammar (p. 48).

RICE, RISE : the straw or stems, after bearing, of peas, beans, and tares. Sometimes treated as a plural. "Them peas is off of some rise he was pullin' this mornin'." A Teutonic word, having no connexion with *rice*, the grain, which is of oriental origin.

RIGHT FOR'ARD : of persons, upright, honest ; of a job, simple, straightforward.

RIGHTLY : exactly, really. "I dunno rightly how 'twas ;" "that don't matter rightly."

RIGHT UP : "to live right up" means to be independent, retired from work. The usual N. Essex word is *upright*.

RINGE : a trench made for sowing seed in a garden ; a row of seedlings.

RISE : (1) to raise. See Grammar (p. 48). (2) (*intr.*) of a garden-crop—"them taters rise wonderin' well" means that they show a good yield when they are dug.

ROBLUM : the Myrobalan plum (*Prunus Myrobalanus*).

ROKE : to stir vigorously, e.g. a fire. D.D. *rauik*.

RUB : a stone for sharpening scythes, etc.

RUCK : to crouch, squat, of a hare, etc.

RUINATION : ruin. "They owd buds 'll be the ruination o' my peas!"

RUNT : a small object, such as a potato, a pig, a child. "A little runt ^{or} means a poor specimen.

RUNTY : cross, ill-tempered.

RUSTY¹ : brown, of foliage seared by frost.

RUSTY² : rancid, of bacon. Properly *reasty*, Fr. *resté*, left over; confused with RUSTY¹.

SAD : of bread, heavy. Early meanings are sated, weary, heavy, solid. Wiclif, Luke vi. 48, "a hoos founded on a sad stoon."

SAILOR : a reaping machine with revolving "sails."

SAUCE (pronounced *saace*) : vegetables. "You must set them sids to onst; don't ye on't have no saace t'year;" "He's got t' pay six shillun a week includin' saace," of a cottage charge for lodging and board. This appears to be a derived meaning. The oldest use is in the sense of seasoning.

SCALD : to burn. "The sun do seem to scald down on ye."

SCALLION : an onion planted out after winter storing, and eaten raw.

SCAT : scared. See Grammar (Verbs, p. 50).

SCENT : a smell, a stink. Also *vb.* "That scents wonderful bad."

SCOLT : scalded. Past participle of *scald*.

SCOTCH. See SCROTCH.

SCRAIL : a sorry animal, old or in poor condition.

SCRAP : to scrape, scratch, as a dog in the ground or at a door.

SCRAVE : a bench for cutting up a dead pig.

SCRIP. See SCRITLINGS.

SCRITLINGS, SCRITS, SCRIPS : scraps of meat or gristle separated in melting fat. A scritling-cake is a flat greasy cake of flour and scritlings.

SCROTCH : a form of *crotch*, a fork in a tree, or a forked stick.¹

SCROUGE : (*sb.*) a crowd; (*vb.*) to crowd.¹

SCRUBY : the local pronunciation of *scrubby*, stunted; of animals, fruit, etc.

SCRUCE : a truce. Used in a children's game, to stop it.

SCUFFLE : of soil, to stir.

SEALS : the wooden fitting to a horse's collar, to which the traces are attached. Cf. HAMES.

SEARCH : of medicines, to penetrate, stir up, act strongly. "That do sarch me proper."

¹ For the initial s see Grammar (p. 62).

- SEEM**: used redundantly. "I can't seem t'get reddy o' m' cowl." The local equivalent of the East Anglian *fare*, which is seldom used in our district.
- SENSE**: in the phrase "no sense," not properly—"I don't sim t'get on no sense."
- SENSIBILITY**: feeling, sensation. "I've got such a curious sensibility over my eye."
- SERE**: dry, of firewood.
- SET**: to sit. See Grammar (p. 48).
- SET-OUT**: (1) a display, quantity—"there's a rare set-out of mud;" "there warn't much of a set-out o' folks at the meet'n'." (2) a disturbance—"a proper set-out they made about it." Also a mess, muddle, etc.
- SEVENSES**: a labourer's morning meal in the fields at harvest. Cf. **ELEVENSES**, **FOURSES**.
- SHACK**: (1) [in plural] corn dropped in the field in harvest. (2) an idler; also *vb.* to idle.
- SHACK-FORK**: a large iron two-tined fork with a curved iron, enlarging its capacity, at the base of the handle; formerly used in harvest for gathering corn, now for shifting cavings.
- SHANNY**: silly.
- SHARP**: to sharpen.
- SHEAL**, **SHEEL**: to shed grain, of over-ripe corn.
- SHEEN**: to work with a threshing machine. A corruption of *machine*.
- SHEEP-BINE**: the Field Bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*).
- SHERES** (shires): used vaguely of other counties, usually in a westerly direction, not East Anglia or the south-eastern counties. In "she's got a sister married somewhere down in the sheres," probably the speaker had no idea where or in what direction. I have heard the remark "Shere people's mostly good cooks." On the other hand, in one of Arthur Morrison's books an Essex man contemptuously remarks "shere people's mostly fools."
- SHINGLE**: used of dry crumbly soil; to shift easily.
- SHORT**: (1) abrupt, of speech—"he spoke wonderful short;" (2) of pastry, vegetables, etc., brittle, tender—"that eat nice and short."
- SHOT**: a division of a field. Upper Shot, Lower Shot, Two Shot, are High Easter field-names.
- SHOVEL**: the obscure expression "that's before you bought your shovel" is apparently a comment on a surprising statement.
- SHRIMPLE**: to shrivel. **SHRIMPY**: shrivelled, of apples, etc.
- SHUT-KNIFE** (*shet-knife*): a pocket-knife.
- SHUT THE GATES**: "that don't do to goo shettin' the gates

- as ye goo along " seems to mean " honesty is the best policy." If you scamp your work, you shut the gate against further employment.
- SIGHT : a large amount. " A rare sight o' trouble."
- SIMPLE : imbecile, of weak intellect. Not used in the proper sense of guileless.
- SINKER. See SWIMMER.
- SITHE : to sigh.
- SKEP : a straw beehive. Also a two-handled basket used chiefly for measuring bushels and half-bushels. Seedskips is the name of a High Easter field.
- SKERRICK : a scrap.
- SKEW : across (obliquely). Also *vb.* to cross diagonally.
- SLAB : a subordinate helper. A bricklayer's assistant is so called.
- SLAMMOCK : a slattern.
- SLAP : local pronunciation of *slab*, a puddle. Sometimes amplified to " slaps o' wet."
- SLEEZY : of textile fabrics, flimsy.
- SLINKS : a slinking, sneaking person. Cf. DOLLOPS.
- SLIP (one's) WIND : to die.
- SLIPE : in field-names, a slip, strip. High Easter fields called Slipe are now all arable, except one which is part grass. In the combining of fields the strip shape has disappeared.
- SLITHER : a splinter. A form of *sliver* (q.v.).
- SLITHERY : underhand. " A slithery thing to do."
- SLIVER : a splinter.
- SLOUGH : a ford or flooded road. A High Easter ford, now bridged, is still The Slough, and gives its name to the road.
- SLUD : mud. An ancient word. In *Morte d'Arthur* (c. 1420) it appears as *slowde*.
- SMEAKY : tainted, of meat.
- SMEARY : drizzly, of rain.
- SMITHER, SMITTER : a scrap. " I don't care a smither."
- SMUDGE : smuts from smoke.
- SNACE : candle-snuff.
- SNACK : a share. " You shay (shan't) goo snacks along o' we."
- SNAISTY (pronounced *snaasty*) : cross, ill-tempered.
- SNAITH (pronounced *snaath*), a scythe handle.
- SNATCH : a twitching, a slight spasm ; in *pl.* " the jumps."
- SNOB : a cobbler. In old dialect it means a cobbler's man, from *snap*, a lad, Danish dialect *snopp*, silly. Thus N.E.D. uncomplimentarily of cobblers. *Vb.* to cobble. " Times he done a bit o' snobbin'." The diminutive SNOBBY is sometimes applied attributively to names, as Snobby Smith, Smith the cobbler.

- SO : so that. See Grammar (p. 55).
- SOMETHING (*intensive adverb*): very. "Somethin' pleased"; "knocked about suff'n cruel."
- SOP : a fool. SOPPY : foolish.
- SOPSY : a wild pear tree, used for grafting.
- SOSS : with *about, out, up*, etc.; to slop (of liquids); to shake out (of seeds, etc.); to mess up food.
- SPALT (pronounced *spolt*): brittle, of succulent parts of plants, wood, etc. "Spalt willow" is "crack" willow (*Salix fragilis*).
- SPEAR : of seeds, to sprout.
- SPEW : to spout. "That'll never do to have that there pipe a spewin' on t' the brickwork."
- SPINE OF THE BACK : the spine; a pleonasm with literary authority to the 17th century.
- SPINNEY : a small wood, properly of underwood or small trees.
- SPINNICK : an obscure term used of a troublesome child—"a nasty little spinnick." *Spinnick, spink* (D.D.), a diminutive or stunted person or thing.
- SPIRE : used of trees. A "spire-oak," "spire-ash," is a young tapering tree without spreading branches.
- SPITTING-IRON : an iron plate strapped under the sole of the boot for digging. *Spit* (*vb.*) in dialect in some parts means to dig. Apparently connected with *spit*, to pierce.
- SPLINTS : willow or oak poles, whole or split into long laths, set vertically or horizontally in clay-daubed walls; used also in thatch.
- SPRAWLY : branchy, of peasticks, etc. *Sprawls*, an East Anglian word, are straggly branches. (D.D.)
- SPRAY : small wood in faggots. Obsolete. The term occurs in old Overseers' account books.
- SPRENGE, SPRAINGE, SPRINGE : a rash. "Nettle-spreng." M.E. *sprengen*, to sprinkle.
- SPRINDLE, SPRINGLE : a stick used to fasten thatch.
- SPRING OF THE YEAR : spring. The original expression, of which *spring* is an abbreviation.
- SPRINGE : to sow seeds, or set potatoes (chats) broadcast. *Sb.*, the rose of a watering-pot.
- SPRINT : to sprinkle. "Save them soapsuds, so I can sprint them beans what's got the collier;" "I'm so hard o' hearin', my ears want sprintin' (syringing) bad."
- SPUFFLER, SPUFFLES : a fusser. "There's a owd spuffles." Cf. DOLLOPS. Our form of an East Anglian word *spuffle*, *spoffle*, to hurry, bustle, and *spuffle*, a fuss.
- SPUR : a piece of wood fixed at the base of a post to strengthen it.

- SQUAB** : to slop (liquids).
- SQUENCH** : to extinguish ; a dialect form of *quench*. See Grammar (p. 62).
- SQUIT** (pronounced *squut*) : a diminutive, contemptible person.
- STADDLE** : the framework on which stacks are sometimes built.
- STAND OFF** : to leave off (work, etc.).
- STAND OUT** : to get up (from bed).
- STANK** : a dam. A transferred use. Properly a pond (Fr. *étang*, Lat. *stagnum*).
- STEDDY** : instead of.
- STEEL** : the wooden handle of a hay-fork, hoe, etc.
- STENT** : a job, work.
- STETCH** : a broad ridge in a ploughed field.
- STICKIN'** (sticking) : a piece of inferior meat.
- STIFLE** : the joint in a horse's leg corresponding to the knee in man.
- STILL** : of persons, quiet, respectable. "A still, quiet woman" is one who does not gossip or interfere with her neighbours.
- STILT** : a crutch.
- STINGY** : bad-tempered, of horses, bees, etc.
- STIVE** : to stifle. Intransitively, to remain in stifling rooms. So the phrase to "stive indoors." "Stived up" is used of a person in a hot close place, or in overwarm clothes.
- STORM** : a shower, rain, not necessarily with wind.
- STOVER** (pronounced *stuvver*) : clover straw.
- STRAICH** : (?) a form of **STROOGE** (q.v.).
- STREET** : (1) the road through a village ; (2) a road remote from the village, with widely scattered houses, or without houses. In High Easter, Green Street is a sparse hamlet ; Parkstrete in Elizabethan times was apparently a remote houseless lane ; Job Street, a field-name, of the Tithe Survey, is perhaps Job's Treat. (See p. 67).
- STRIKE** : to level corn, etc., in a measure by passing a stick across the top. *Sb.* a stick so used. The verb is used of spreading butter, etc., on bread.
- STROOGE** : to walk feebly, as an old person ; to strut, walk with, at least supposed, display.
- STUB**¹ : to dig out, e.g. gravel, a tree-stump, or strong plants. *Sb.* a large plant such as a potato or artichoke with the tubers, rhubarb, etc.
- STUB**² : an abbreviation of *disturb*. A queer expression is to "stub a row," to make a disturbance.
- STUMPS** : the short undeveloped feathers in a bird, hard to pull out. *Vb.* to extract these. An old man who had been

robbed remarked " a don't mind pluck'n, but a cay (can't) stand stump'n."

STUNTED : numbed ; of an injured limb.

STUPE : a stupid person.

SUB : an advance of wages.

SUKEY : a kettle.

SUNDAY : the phrase " to look all ways for Sunday " is used of a bewildered person failing to see the obvious. The similar phrase " to look two ways for Easter " is used in some parts (D.D.)

SWAG : to sway.

SWANGE : to " brush " a hedge or rough grass.

SWIFT : an eft.

SWIMMER : a plain dumpling. If lightly made, it floats ; if not it sinks. Hence SINKER.

SWINDGEL : the loose section of a flail.

SWITHER : to recover, get on, hold out. Of a sick or tired person or animal, or a sickly plant. Of a tired horse after a feed you may say " I count he'll swither on now." Participle *swithered*, recovered.

TACK : to tie, fasten.

TAKE : (1) used redundantly ; " that took an' died right off " ; " if ye don't like ut, take an' goo." (2) to eat. " She can't take " is said of an invalid. So *take to* in the same sense—" she didn't allow herself enough to take to." This is genuine dialect ; the preceding use—*take for eat*—is perhaps modern affectation.

TAKE IN : to turn into fields from the road.

TAKE ON : to lament, fuss. " She do take on wonderful." The phrase, now colloquial, has excellent literary authority from the *Paston Letters* (15th century) down to Thackeray. Coverdale, Pepys, and Galt are among its users.

TAKE TO : (1) to take a liking to. " That depends on where she takes to," whom or what she likes. (2) See TAKE (2).

TALK TO : a euphemism for " to make love to."

TANNIS FIRE, ST. TANNIS FIRE : St. Antony's fire, erysipelas. Probably obsolete.

TARES : rough grass, weeds.

TATER : to dig potatoes, or to take them out of the clamp.

TEA : to take tea in company. " We tead at the Vicarage a year ago come Christmas."

TEA TREE : *Symphoricarpus racemosus*, Snowberry. An uncommon use. The term is usually applied to *Lycium barbarum*, the Duke of Argyll's Tea-tree.

TEASE : a teasing person.

- TECHY : cross, fretful. The modern *touchy* is a corruption.
- TELL THE BEES : the custom with us, when a death occurs in the house, is to tap each hive and tell the bees, not in a whisper, as in some parts, but loudly. Else the bees die.
- TEMPEST (pronounced *tempust*) : a thunderstorm, not necessarily with wind.
- TENDER : of plants, weakly, or not of robust habit.
- TERRIFY : to irritate, of biting insects, a boil, a cough, etc.
 "He's bin that terrified o' harvest bugs, he hasn't known how t' bear hisself." Peas in the pod are "terrified" by maggots. An old literary use. Milton (*Ch. Govt.* II. iii.) has "working only by terrifying Plaisters."
- TETHER : refuse left after sheep have fed in a field, remains of the crop, dung, etc.
- TEWLY : ailing, poorly.
- THANK YE FOR ME : an acknowledgment of hospitality.
- THARRER : the local pronunciation of *furrow*.
- THAXTED : sharp, clever. "A count he's t' Thaxted for ye."
 Thaxted was once distinguished for a small cutlery industry.
- THRAP : a crowd. THRAP-FULL, very crowded.
- THRAVE (pronounced *trave*) : a shock of corn-sheaves. *Vb.* to TRAVE UP, to pile up in shocks.
- THRIFT : a wood name, not common. Canfield Thrift is a local example. Presumably connected with *thrive*, as is the plant-name Thrift. Cf. SPRING (Addenda).
- THUNDERBUG : a midge, the crawling kind.
- THURRIN : a local pronunciation of *foreign*.
- TIDDLE : to tickle. "That stops the tiddlin' in my throat."
- TIDDY : small, tiny.
- TIDDYMITE : a very small thing.
- TIDY : considerable—"a tidy lot o' plums." Also *adv.*—"we done tidy well t'year."
- TIFFLE : to trifle, potter. "Tiffin' about" expresses aimless action. *Sb.* TIFFLIN', light work. An ailing person will say, "I got up an' done a little tiffin'." The expression is unfairly used by farmers and labourers of the amateur, however hard he works at his holding. "That ain't only tiffin'; that ain't business," is often said. Thus the narrowness of the business mind.
- TIGHT UP : to tidy.
- TILLER : the shaft horse in a team.
- TIME : "a time or two," once or twice, "time enough," in time, "times" or "times enough," often, are common expressions. As *conj.*, when, while—"time I lived along o' he."
- TIMORSOME : timorous.

- TING-TANG**: a small church bell, the smallest of the peal, or apart from the peal, rung just before service.
- TIP**: to walk nimbly. "I see him come a tipp'n along."
- TIT**: a small faggot for heating an oven.
- TIT-TAT-TO**: a child's game. A figure of concentric circles is numbered and dabbed at with shut eyes.
- TITTEMY-TORTER**: a see-saw. One of the numerous forms of *titter-totter* (D.D.), a reduplication of *totter*, to be unsteady, to tilt.
- TITTY**: the female breast, teat.
- TIZZICK**: to have a tickling cough. "He kep on tizzickin' all night." *Verbal sb.*, "sech a tizzickin' in m' throat." *Adj.* "a tizzickin' cough." Shakspeare, *T. and C.*, V., iii. 101, has *tisick* for a troublesome cough or cold, and Milton a similar use. A dialect form of *phthisic*.
- TOAR**: old rough grass.
- TOFF** (recent slang): used indifferently of any male person of real or supposed superiority. See Grammar (p. 70).
- TOGETHER** (together): used redundantly in addressing two or more persons. "When are ye comin' to mine together?" Not that the persons are to come together, but just by way of friendly association. Sometimes it is oddly used to a single person.
- TOPPINGS**: fine bran. "Toppin's dumplin's" were a common substitute for bread early in the 19th century, when corn was dear. Thus were things once worse even than now.
- TORE OUT**: exhausted. "I'm right tore out, I am."
- TO RIGHTS**: properly, thoroughly. "You done that there job to rights."
- TOWARD**. See OFFARD.
- TRADE**: a fuss. "To make a trade," "drive a trade" is to make a to-do.
- TRAFFIC**: to walk to and fro. A carpet much trodden is "trafficked over."
- TRAMMEL**: the iron lever by which the cooking pot in the chimney is handled; or the pot-hook.
- TRAPES**: (1) to trudge—"I wonder whatever she come a trapesin' all that way for." (2) to gad about—"I see her a trapesin' up an' down." Also of slatternly, "down-at-heel" walk.
- TREACLE** (up): to rub, polish, furniture, etc.
- TRUCK**: rubbish. Originally traffic, barter; so of things bartered, commodities; and so, degenerately, rubbish.
- TRUMPERY** (*sb.*): rubbish, e.g. weeds in cultivated ground, muck in a choked drain, etc.
- TRY** (down): to melt (fat).

TUNNEL : a funnel.

TURK : a troublesome boy—"A young Turk, that's what he is."

TURN UP : to throw over, abandon. "They took all she had, and then turned her up, pore old thing."

TWIDDLE : to twine ; of a climbing plant.

TWINDLY, TWINDLING : of plants, weakly. "The taters is wunnerf'l poor t'year, little twindly bines."

TWINGLE : a twig.

TWINK : a twinkling, moment. "In a twink," in a moment, is Shaksperian.

TWISTY : of an old person, or a child, cross, peevish.

TWITCH : *Triticum repens*, the "couch-grass" of botanists. *Twitch* is a form of *quitch*, of which *couch* is another variant (O.E. *cwice*). The word is also applied to other grasses with underground creeping stems.

TWOTHEREES : belongings—"I see him a movin' his little twotherees ;" or of a child's toys.

TWOTHRY : few, scarce (two or three). "Plums is wunnerful twothy t'year." The *o* sound as *oo* in *took*.

TYE : a rather baffling word. It is from O.E. *téag*, an enclosure. It occurs rather frequently in our district, in field-names, as Great and Little Tye, Bellhouse Tye, Chisel's Tye ; in an ancient house-site, Maiden's Tye, a moated enclosure ; and in a small hamlet, Lofty Green, formerly Lovety (pronounced *Lufty*). These in High Easter parish. In neighbouring parishes it appears in field-names and hamlet names, but less frequently. There are Tye Green, Good Easter, and Wells Tye Green, Barnston, Tye Hall, Roxwell, Harlow Tye and Matching Tye. In Felsted Bannister Green is a corruption of Burlongstye Green, popularly Bunsty. Thistley Green is anciently Fystie Green. Elsewhere in Essex are Margaretting Tye, Corbett's Tye, Upminster, and Tye Green, Elsenham. These are hamlets at meetings of roads, usually with a green. There is also the parish name Tilty. The term seems to occur only in Essex, South Suffolk, Hertfordshire, Kent and Sussex. Its O.E. origin seems to account for these uses, all the localities being ancient enclosures, larger or smaller, from the waste. The Essex parish name Tey, Great, Little, and Mark's, Tey, is probably of other origin. Dr. Bradley, of the *New English Dictionary*, writes, "There is an Old Norse word *teig-r*, a strip of grass land, and, as in Essex there is a strong Scandinavian element, it is possible that this, and not the O.E. word, is the source of the place-names there. The O.N. and O.E. words can hardly be cognate . . . but I cannot help thinking that the *sense* of

the O.E. word may have been due to the influence of the like-sounding O.N. *teig-r*."

T'YEAR: this year. A formation similar to *to-day*, *to-night*, *to-morrow*. Chaucer, C.T., *Wife's Prologue*, 168, "Yet hadde I lever wedde no wyf to-yere."

UNDERMINDED: underhanded, mean.

UNHONEST: dishonest.

UNMERCIFUL (*onmarciful*): exceedingly; an intensive adverb applied somewhat indiscriminately to many adjectives.

UNODNY: extraordinary. See ODNY.

UNTOWARD: used variously; of persons, disagreeable, awkward to deal with; of work, awkward, difficult; of an action, extraordinary, incredible.

UP: used verbally, with ellipse of verb—"I up an' answered her strite, I did."

UPSIDES WITH: a match for.

UP TOP: for *up atop*, on, at, or to, the top, of a house, garden, etc.

USE: to be accustomed, used with *do*—"I don't use to do it," and, ungrammatically, "I didn't used."

VAIL: a gratuity, tip.

WALK: a device for controlling children, and teaching them to walk. A box with open top, and no bottom. The child is inserted, and kept in place by a sliding board. Perhaps only a fancy name, but the device was in use not so long ago.

WALK WITH: or along of, to court, keep company; of lovers.

WANKED: exhausted, tired.

WANT (*vb.*). See Grammar (p. 52).

WANTS: a meeting of three or four roads. Sometimes in the form of "three-want way," "four-want way." *Want* is a form of *went*, originally a way, O.E. *wendan*, to turn, go. Chaucer (*Book of the Duchesse*, 398) has "a floury grene wente, ful thikke of gras."

WANTY: a horse's belly-band.

WARP: to embank a water-channel with boarding. Apparently a corruption of *wharf*.

WASH: a ford or a flooded road.

WASTE: to use up. "Ye're wastin' y'r onions proper now" means "you are getting through them," without suggestion of extravagant use. Similarly of work. "Wasting" the corn in harvest means getting through it quickly.

WATER-GRASS: coarse grass, of a strong twitchy habit.

WATERING: a road liable to flooding. A "watery lane" is a roadway which forms the bed of a stream.

WATERPOCK: an eruptive ailment of children.

WATERY-HEADED: apprehensive of rain. "Oh don't be so watery-headed" is said to the dismal prophet of rain.

WAYS: distance—"a good ways off." See Grammar (p. 43).

WEATHER-BREEDER: a fine day amid bad ones.

WEAVE: to wave, of boughs in a gale. *Adj.* **WEAVY**, wavy.

WEIR (pronounced *ware*): a pond. Only certain ponds are so called. One at the Bury Farm, High Easter, is called "the Bury Ware," perhaps because it is dammed off from an adjacent lower pond. The normal meaning of *weir* is a dam.

WET: to rain slightly.

WET WEEK: to "look," or "feel, like a wet week," expresses melancholy. "I'd wait a wet week, so's I'd ketch him," is somewhat obscure.

WHATSOMEVER. See Grammar (p. 47).

WHELM (pronounced *whellum*): the covering of a channel under a gateway. M.E. *whelmen* is to cover by turning something upside down.

WHOLLY: thoroughly, altogether. "I was wholly scat, that a was."

WILLIAM: an owl; a ram. See **MASTER WILLIAM** and **OLD WILL**.

WIM: a timber-waggon.

WINDING: a bend in a road where another road comes in, a corner.

WITHOUT: unless. See Grammar (p. 55).

WITTY: clever, shrewd, sharp, e.g. in business transactions.

WOMAN: wife. "My woman" corresponds to "my man." Sometimes less politely "the woman." The housekeeper is "the woman," or, more politely, "the good lady."

WONDERFUL: great—"a wonnerful set-out o' taters." *Adv.* very, greatly, "wunnerful pleased." For the adverbial use of the adjective see Grammar (p. 44).

WONDERING: used as **WONDERFUL**—"wond'rin' drunk;" "he used to swear wond'rin'."

WOOLVE. See **HULVE**.

WRING: to twist, contort; in the phrases to "wring mouths," "wring faces," to grimace.

YAP: to talk noisily, snappishly. "She come a yappin' arter me—a owd huzzey."

YARB: a herb.

YARL: to shout, bawl. Also used of the discordant noises of poultry.

YARN: the local pronunciation of *earn*.

YELLOW-YANK (pronounced *yaller*): a yellow-hammer.

YELM (pronounced *yellum*): a layer of straw prepared for thatching. *Vb.* **YELM OUT**, to lay out straw thus.

YOURN: your house. See Grammar (Pronouns).

GRAMMAR

THE grammatical and phonological forms here set out are only, as a rule, those that differ from the ordinary literary forms.

Of the words given as examples, perhaps about four-fifths are ancient or of some antiquity, survivors of bygone literary forms or of old dialect ; and of the rest, probably most are ancient, too. It must be borne in mind that, whereas it is easy to establish the authority of literary forms, because there are literary records to prove it, records of dialect speech are comparatively few. It is impossible to imagine that words and forms such as *nit* (not), *el'm* (elm) *whel'm*, *leece* (lice), *hully* (wholly), *clent*, *glent*, *pelt*, *golt* (galled), *drest*, *joured*, are modern inventions, though the *New English Dictionary* does not include them among forms of ancient use. That simply means that no written record of these forms exists. Let none therefore think of dialect words as mere vagaries. Vagaries there undoubtedly are among them, but they are exceptions ; and, until the dictionary has been searched and rules of probability applied, the dialect form should always have the credit of ancient descent.

Dialect speech is often taken as incorrect because it tends to disregard inflexion. It has probably always done so. And if therein it errs against strict grammar, at least it shows its sense. Our literary language has thrown overboard much of the inflexion of early English, just as the latter discarded much of that of its parent languages, and dialect shows how much more can be discarded—not, of course, consciously, but in happy ignorance of its nature, and by a natural instinct of easing speech. It must be remembered that dialect is the speech of people who have a limited vocabulary and range of subjects, which are familiar to all ; and dialect is therefore more or less independent of inflexion as a help to expression. The same is seen carried still further in the so-called “ pidgin ” English and other jargons by which Europeans, Asiatics, and Africans marvellously communicate.

Still, inflexion remains with us, established in literary language, and dialect continues to use it in a measure, as is seen in the following lists. But persons and cases differ. Some persons in dialect use inflected forms more, some less, some scarcely at all. The following example shows to some extent how they can be dispensed with: "She come and see me just afore she start, and she say she feel wunnerful tewly. Then she run off, and when she get as fur as the Bury she rec'lect she leave her puss at mine, and have to come all that way back, and lose her train arter all."

Curiously, the verb *take* is always allowed its inflexion in the past tense. See Dictionary.

ARTICLES

A, for *an*, is commonly used before words beginning with a vowel or *h* mute, as *a apple, a egg, a ounce, a hour*.¹ This appears to be a purely dialect use. There seems to be no literary instance of it. *A* is a weakened form of O.E. *an* (one), which was at first a numeral, used before consonants and vowels alike. By 1150 *an* had weakened into an article, and at the same time produced its weak offspring *a*, which became the normal form in literary speech before words beginning with a consonant. How the use before a vowel arose there seems to be nothing to show. On first thoughts, "a egg" seems harder to say than "an egg." But perhaps the blurring of the *a* makes the sound easy. Instances in the *Dialect Dictionary* are few and sporadic, recorded from widely distant counties, north, south, and west. There is no record from Essex, but it is commonly used in our district. Perhaps the modern Elementary School may be re-establishing the use of *an* before a vowel. But it is a curious fact that in a certain Public (Secondary) School in Glamorgan it is becoming increasingly common to hear "Please, sir, may I have a exercise book."

A is used redundantly before words expressing quantity, *a many*,² *a plenty*, as in the literary use *a few*.

The is commonly used before names of ailments, *the jaundice, the measles, the rheumatics, the sciatic, the headache*. In *the tother*, which is used by all old authors from the 13th century, the *the* is a misconception, the original expression

¹ Cf. the similar use with the preposition *a, an* (on), p. 57.

² "A many merry men" (Shakspeare, *As You Like It*, I. i. 121). The strange phrase *a good few* has literary authority. Carlyle uses it twice in *Frederick the Great*.

being M.E. *thet* (that) *other*.¹ *Tother* (a contraction of *the other*) does not appear until the 16th century. It occurs often in Shakspeare. *The both* dates back to the 13th century.

NOUNS

Plurals. Words in *-sk*, *-sp*, *-st*, form their plural in *es*, which adds a syllable—*cash-es*, *crust-es*, *wasp-es*, *neest-es* (nests). Cf. p. 52. *Housen* is our only non-literary plural in *en*. *Louse*, *mouse*, make *leece*, *meece*; *cress*, *creesses*; *foot*, *fit* or *fet*. *Wasp-es nest* has, at any rate, the sound of the ancient possessive case. *Way* is curiously used in the plural, "that ain't a great ways off," perhaps after the literary *anyways*, *lengthways*, *sideways*, in which the *s* represents the old genitive termination *-es*, used to give adverbial force (Cf. p. 54).

Many nouns expressing time, weight, measure, and the like, remain unchanged in the plural, as *hour* ("two hour ago"), *year*, *pound*, *stone*, *score*, *hundred* (hundredweight), *ton*, *peck*, *bushel*, *quarter*, *mile*, *shilling*, *pair*. Most of these generally have ancient literary authority. *Beast* (cattle) is often similarly treated, as are *sheep*, *deer*, etc., in literary language. But we say *folks*, not *folk*, and *mowlds* (garden soil), and sometimes *plenties*, a curious use of which the *Dialect Dictionary* gives no instance. Double plurals are seen in *elevenses*, *fourses*, *sevenses* (labourers' intermediate meals in haytime and harvest). The ancient and proper plural *peasen* has disappeared, but, on the analogy of the comparatively recent singular *pea*, formed backwards from *pease* taken as a plural, and *shay* similarly formed from *chaise*, *maize*, *bullace*, and *rice* (pea and bean stalks) are treated as plurals. We always refer to them by *they*, *these*, etc. *Sauce* (vegetables), and words in *-ance*, as *allowance*, are also apparently so regarded. We have deduced *phlock* from *phlox*, and established the ridiculous singular *varico vein*. I have heard of, but have not met, *paralysis* thus treated and coupled with *these*; but to imagine the singular form in this case is hard. The reverse is seen in *baize*, properly *bays*, the plural of *bay* (Lat. *badius*, brown). *Kind* and *sort* are treated as plurals, as having collective force—"these—those—them *kind*." For this use there is ample literary authority. Both *kind* and *sort* are so used by writers from the 16th century. Shakspeare (*King Lear*, II. ii. 107) has "these kind of knaves,"

¹ "The toon shall be taken and the tother left" (Wiclif, Luke xvii. 35) (*N.E.D.* text). The corresponding phrase *the tone* (that one) is also common in old writers, and is still used in various forms in dialect in the north and as far south as East Anglia.

and recent authors, e.g. Trollope, Ruskin, and R. L. Stevenson¹ similarly use *sort*. For *kind of*, *sort of*, used adverbially, see Adverbs below.

ADJECTIVES

Certain adjectival uses have been mentioned under Articles above. To these may be added the use of *like* as a substantive, usually in the plural—"that ain't for the likes o' we." Literary instances of this are common from the earliest times, both singular and plural being coupled with a singular or plural pronoun or expression at the writer's will. Thus we find in literature "his (or their) like (or likes)," "the like (or likes) of me (or them)."

The seeming use of adjectives as adverbs, common in Shakspeare and literature generally, is a survival of the O.E. adverbial form, which by dropping the suffix *-e* became identical with the adjective. We say "ye can easy retch that far,"² "times she take on cruel," "them owd ashes do stink pourin'." Sometimes two adjectives are thus coupled: "that ache dreff'l bad;" "she acts wunnerful strange." Many other adjectives are similarly used in our district, and most of them have a literary record; as *bad*—"he ain't done that so bad," "I ain't so bad off as all that;" *pretty*—"I spraeled over them stones pretty;" *jolly*, *uncommon*, *unmerciful* (*on-marciful*), *proper*, *particular*, *fearful*, *mighty*, *precious*, *terrible*, *extraordinary*, etc. Coverdale (1549) has "I thought my selfe a iolye fortunate man (*pulcre mihi videbar felix*)"; Florio (1578) "Boccace is prettie hard, yet understood"; Caxton (1489) "the duke spored hys horse terryble"; there is the familiar passage in the Prayer Book Version of the Psalms, cxlv. 3. (Coverdale, 1535), "Greate is the Lorde, and marvelous worthy to be prayed;" and we still say "hit hard" and "run fast." Thus the modern use has full authority in many instances, and, where it has not, common sense often supports it. Extreme pedantry only would insist on *jollily*, *extraordinarily*, and so on. On the other hand *awful*,³ for all its universal vogue, has no authority for its adverbial use.

¹ *Kidnapped*, p. 74.

² "Which the false man does easy" (Shakspeare, *Macbeth*, II. iii. 143).

³ The examples in *N.E.D.* show in an interesting manner how *awful* gradually passed from the meanings frightful, monstrous, to use as a meaningless intensive, starting from Lamb, 1834. *Fearful* (adv.) is much older. Sir T. Herbert, traveller and historian, has (1634) "the people of Angola are fearfulle blacke."

Of course the incorrect use of the superlative for the comparative is common—"I dunno as that ain't the best of the two." But Shakspeare has it here and there, e.g. (*1 Henry VI.* II. iv. 15) "Between two girls, which hath the merriest eye, I have perhaps some shallow spirit of judgement." Jane Austen indulges in it freely, and Swinburne is responsible for "neither is most to blame." Current speech is so far blameless.

A few double and unusual comparative and superlative forms are used, as *wusser* (worse), *lessest*, *leasteest*, *littler*, *littlest*, *headest* (see Dictionary). *Bettermost* has some literary authority from 1762. Meredith (*Egoist*) uses it. *More* is often added to comparatives—"more livelier," "more solider." This is common in Shakspeare,¹ who also uses *littlest*. *More like* is curiously used in the sense of *somewhat like*, where there is no actual comparison.

Of numerals, the cardinal forms are used elliptically of age—"I'm in my sixty."

For *tother* and *the tother*, see pp. 42, 43. *Tother day* (a few days ago) is also an ancient use. Other adjectival phrases are *for ever*, and *for everlasting*, meaning *very much* or *very many* ("You've got for everlastin' marrers") (see Dictionary); and *sech*, unnecessarily appended, as in "He's a pore thing; he don't eat only messes and sech"; *every each one* for *every other one*; *none o' (the) both* for *neither*.² *Either* and *neither* are used with a plural verb, but so they are in educated speech, and, incorrect as the use is, with plenty of literary authority from Shakspeare to Ruskin.³ The adjectival use of *plenty*—"plenty tunnups," and the like—is ancient and continuous. Shakspeare, Defoe, and R. L. Stevenson exhibit it.

PRONOUNS

The following pronominal irregularities are in general by no means lacking in literary authority. Chaucer, Shakspeare, and past writers of repute generally, take frequent liberties with pronouns. Some of the uses were formerly, as now, colloquial or vulgar, and some are labelled by the *Oxford Dictionary* as "now illiterate." Nevertheless they are at least no modern invention. It would be a tedious matter to comment on the literary claims of all the forms set out here. This statement and a few footnotes must suffice.

¹ "A more larger list of sceptres" (Shakspeare, *Antony and Cleopatra*, III. vi. 76).

² *None*, of two persons or things, and "neither of both," are 16th century usages.

³ *Cymbeline*, IV. ii. 253, "Thersites' body is as good as Ajax', when neither are alive."

PERSONAL PRONOUNS.—*He, she, they* are used redundantly in such phrases as “Mr. —, he come to mine yes’d’y.”¹ *Me, him, her, us, them*, objectives, are used for their respective nominatives—“We shall have to git up tidy forr’d, shan’t us?”² “Her n’yit me hasn’t missed one meetin’.” Conversely *he, she, we* are used for *him, her, us*—“Oi never hot he fust;” “they owd boo-ys plegged we wunnerful.” Both uses are seen in “Parson’s comin’ to live atween we; us’ll have to moind our manners.”³ *That* takes the place of *it*—“*that that is;*” “*that sned all night,*” “*don’t goo nigh that hoss; that kicks.*” *Us* is put for *me*—“here, gie us a bit.” Our dialect makes no distinction between *ye* (nom.) and *you* (objective)—*ye* is perhaps the commoner form for both cases—“now stop cryin’, ’on’t ye? don’t I’ll larn ye.” The distinction, a rule of O.E. grammar, is scrupulously observed in the Authorized Version of the Bible, but Elizabethan and later writers generally disregarded it, Shakspeare, for instance, often. Thus (*Julius Cæsar*, III. i. 157) “I do beseech ye, if you bear me hard.” *You* appears redundantly in “run you along,” and “well done you.” *They* and *them*, often with *there* added, are used as demonstratives;—“that was them there owd rabbuts eat they greens.”⁴ *They* and *them* appear to be interchangeable.

POSSESSIVE.—*Ourn, yourn* are common forms of *ours, yours*.⁵ *Mine, ourn, yourn, his* are used with the meaning *my, your, his, our* house—“he ain’t bin to mine this ever so long.” *My, your*, sometimes take the place of *mine, yours*—“that’s jest like one o’ my.” Dialect, as does unliterary speech generally, uses the possessive pronoun with reference to meals—“he ain’t had his breakfast yit.” Why, I fail to see, for it could not be any other’s meal. So we shun the intransitive *wash*, and say “I was up top a washin’ myself.” *Their* is used with a singular noun⁶—“one o’ them birds what was caught left their beak in the trap”; “that ’ere tank don’t

¹ “The skipping king he ambled up and down” (Shakspeare, *I Henry IV.* III. ii. 60).

² “Say, where shall’s lay him?” (Shakspeare, *Cymbeline*, IV. ii. 233).

³ “Yes, you have seen Cassio and she together” (Shakspeare, *Othello*, IV. ii. 3).

⁴ This *they* in northern dialects may represent the Scottish *thae* (those), but probably not with us.

⁵ “His conversacioun is in hevене, as ouden shulden be” (Wiclif, *Sel. Wks.*, II. 154).

⁶ This is common in literature when there is an implied plural—e.g. “Every person now recovered their liberty” (Goldsmith, *Hist. Eng.* III. 241). With less excuse Thackeray, *Vanity Fair*, xli., “a person can’t help their birth.” So, at least, Rosalind Crawley.

fill theirselves right full." *Hisselself* is often used for *himself*, and *theirselves* for *themselves*.¹

DEMONSTRATIVE.—*This*, *these*, have a redundant *here* added, and *that*, *those*, a *there*, the latter shortened to 'ere—"This here (that 'ere) pup's took an' got the mange." *This* is used of time just passed, as in "this dinner time"; "he's laid abed this three weeks." *And that* is used redundantly, often expressing contempt—"she kep' a pleggin' o' me about her owd kitten an' that." *These* is commonly shortened to *thee*,² "there's a lot o' draught comes in at thee winders." *That* is used adverbially with the force of *so*—"my gums is that sore I can't hardly chank"; "I know that much." This use has good literary authority. For *these* (those) *kind*, *sort*, see Nouns above (pp. 43, 44). A curious anomaly is *them lot*, that lot, those people.

RELATIVE.—*Who* and *which* are avoided, and *whom* is not used. *As*, *that*, and *what* are the usual forms for all genders in these cases, singular and plural—"them people as (or what) come yes'd'y's gone agin a'ready."³ *What* is pleonastic in such expressions as "I ain't so ill as what he is, by a long ways." "He can't work now like what he used to could." The dialect form *whatsomever* is correct and is an ancient literary form. (Cf. *howsomever*, Adverbs, p. 54).

INTERROGATIVE.—*Whom* is not used, and *who* is used ungrammatically for *whom*, as in "educated" speech—"who did you borner that off of?"

INDEFINITE.—For *either*, *neither*, see Adjectives (p. 45).

VERBS

Forms in literary use are mostly excluded from these lists. The past tense and past participle may be taken as identical unless both forms are given. Dialect, with its commendable economy of inflexion, usually employs the same form for the past tense and past participle.

I. Verbs which preserve old strong forms in the past tense and past participle.

Beat	bet
Heat	het

¹ *Hisselself* was a literary form from the 14th century to the 17th, a it still is in the expressions *his own*, *his very self*. *Self* is used with plurals by old writers—"hem (them) self"; "ye you silf" (Wiclif). *Self* then stands for the O.E. plural *selfe*, of which the *-e* has disappeared.

² *Thee* for *these* appears to be a vagary of dialect. There is no such form in ancient literary English.

³ "That kind of fruit as maids call medlars" (Shakspeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, II. i. 36).

Fleet	flet (" flet ¹ milk ")
Float	flet
Treat	tret
Weed	wed (" them oinons was well wed ")
Lade	lad (" our roblums ¹ is well lad t'year ")
Help	holp
Hit	hot
Set, sit	set, sot (the two verbs seem to be indistinguishable)
Swell	swoll (swole)
Creep	crep, crope
Keep	kep
Leap	lep
Reap	rep
Sleep	slep
Sweep	swep
Hoe	hew
Mow	mew
Show	shew (pronounced <i>shue</i>)
Snow	snew
Sow	sew (also <i>sewed</i> —both are very ancient forms)
Thaw	thew (more usually <i>thahed</i>)
Hold	hewd
Fight	fit
Freeze	friz (the present is also <i>frize</i> and the participle <i>froze</i>)
Reach, retch	retch
Rise	riz (participle also <i>rose</i>) ²
Roll	rool
Shriek	shruck

II. Verbs which have the literary form in the past tense, but, as a rule, avoid the modern literary participial form.

Begin	began
Bite	bit
Break	broke (Chaucer)
Choose	chose
Drive	driv, druv, dreft, past. part. drove (Shakspeare)

¹ See Dictionary.

² *Riz* and *rose* are used for the literary *raised*, the verbs *rise* and *raise* being confused, if indeed *raise* can be said to be used at all. We say "the master he riz me a shillun yes'd'y;" "the price was rose last Sad-d'y." Wiclif (Matt. xvii. 8) has "forsoothe thei, rysynge her up eiȝen, sawen no man, no but Jhesus aloon." A good local example is a gardener's remark concerning a row of peas—"I kep' a risin' them wires, cos they shouldn't hu't 'em."

Eat	eat ¹
Fall	fell (this also serves for the transitive use "to fall a tree")
Forget	forgot
Give ²	give, gin, gon; gie, past tense only
Ride	rode (Shakspere)
Shake	shook (Shakspere)
Speak ²	spoke (Chaucer)
Stave	stove ³
Steal	stole (Chaucer)
Swear	swore
Take ²	took (Chaucer and Shakspere)
Tear	tore
Tread (treed)	trod
Wake	woke
Wear	wore
Wrap (wrop)	wrop (also <i>wropped</i>)
Write	writ, wrote (Shakspere)

Good examples of these identical preterites and participles are seen in the common expression "that's been took good care of," and in Father William's⁴ highly picturesque remark "What ye give me wasn't only wittles what ye'd eat all ye could off of."

III. Verbs which have weak forms in the past tense and past participle instead of the literary form.

Blow	blowed
Draw	drawed
Grow	growed
Know	knowed
Throw	throwed
Burst	bursted, busted ⁵ (also <i>bust</i>)
Cast	casted ⁶
Cost	costed
Thrust	thrusted
Run	runned (also <i>run</i>)
Catch, ketch	cotched

¹ "Jhesu . . . was tempted of the deuyll and eet (ete) no thing" (Wiclif, Luke iv. 2).

² Compounds, *forgive*, *bespeak*, *mistake*, have similar participles. *Mistook*, participle, is Shaksperean.

³ *Stove*. This irregular form has literary use from the 18th century.

⁴ See Introduction, p. vi.

⁵ *Bursted* appears in literary English of the 18th and 19th centuries, but it is an incorrect form. The present dialect form is usually *busted*.

"They risen up and castiden out him with oute the citee" (Wiclif, Luke iv. 29).

IV. Verbs which have weak forms contracted in pronunciation.

Clean	clent ¹
Glean	glent
Peel	pelt
Scald	scolt
Gall	golt
Drive	dreft (see also Group II)
Heave	heft
Ask	ast ²

A few unclassified examples remain.

Come	come
Do	done
Go	gone (participle also went) ³
Join	joured
Lie	} laid (the two verbs are confused. <i>Lay</i> (past) and <i>lain</i> are not used)
Lay	
See	see, seed, sin

Scare makes p.p. *scat*, shortened from *scared* through *scart*.

Bear irregularly has p.p. *borned*.

AUXILIARY AND ANOMALOUS VERBS

In the composite verb *be*, *is* often acts for *are*, and *ain't* for *am not*, *is not*, *are not*. *Are* is used for *have*. To the remark "Well, I got t'goo home now," the answer may be "Oh, are ye?"⁴ In the past tense *were* (*wor*) is often singular, and *was* plural. *Be* forms of the present tense are not commonly used, only in "there you be" and the like. *Bes* (bees) for *is*, representing the ancient forms *beis*, *bese*, is occasionally used. *Bain't* occurs sometimes, but appears to be not indigenous.

HAVE. *Haves* and *have* are used for *has*, *hain't* and *ain't* for *have not* and *has not*. *Hadn't* is preferred in such expressions as "I wonder that hadn't stung ye" to the usual "didn't (sting)." *Have* is sometimes omitted—"look what

¹ A quaint recent development is *sprung-clent*, past participle of *spring-clean*. And worthy to be set beside this is "I'd better do so-and-so, bett'n't I?"

² *Ast* is also used incorrectly for *ask*.

³ Examples of *went* are curious—"I should never a went;" "she wanted to a went;" "I shouldn't never a let him a went." Wiclif (Mark vii. 29) has "the fend is went out of thi doughter."

⁴ There is evident confusion between the two verbs. To "you've got plenty to do, then," the answer may be "Yes, a am." Possibly what sounds like *are* is sometimes a form of *have*; e.g. in "what are I got to do?" perhaps *have* is shortened to *a*, and *r* inserted on account of the following vowel. (See p. 64, Atonic *a*).

ye bin and done." Sometimes it is duplicated; a careful dialect speaker will say "had I have known, I should not have acted like that;" and the heedless child of nature says "if that 'd a bin like that, that 'd a bin all roight." *Have* is often clipped, as in "ef he wants ut, he shall ha't," and, as above, into atonic *a*. (See p. 64, and example in the note on *went*, p. 50).

CAN and SHALL. Negative forms are *cain't*, *cait*, *ket*, *cay*, *shain't*, *shait*, *shet*, *shay*, varying locally. "I cay help ut," "I shay do ut," are often heard in the Felsted district.

Should is used with the infinitive as a substitute for the past tense. In "they tell me So-and-so should say—" "should say" is merely the equivalent of "said."¹

WILL for emphasis is pronounced *ooll*—"he *ooll* have ut."² *Will not* is *on't* or *o't*.

DO. *Don't* is used for *does not* as well as for *do not*; *did not* is *din't*, *dedn't* and *den't*. The curious conditional use of *do*, *does* (pronounced *doos*, the *oo* as in *soot*), and *don't*, is common—"he ain't bin this way, do (or doos) I den't see him," "stop that noise, don't I'll larn ye."³ *Don't* is repeated for emphasis—"don't be s' silly, don't." "*Do ye don't*" is an emphatic amplification of *don't*. *Done* (participle) is curiously used with reference to any operation mentioned or implied; e.g. of vaccination and confirmation alike you may hear "I tell ye, I ain't a goin' t' have him done."

DARE makes *daresn't* and *dussn't* for all persons, sing. and pl., from old forms *dares*, present (3rd pers. sing.) and *durst* (past).

LET has a good idiomatic use in such expressions as "let ye not be where there's things to pick," a father's sage advice to his son.

OUGHT is preceded by an unnecessary *had* or *did*, of which the former has some claim to correctness and literary authority, *ought* being a form of *owed*; the latter cannot be defended.

¹ This is a literary use, mostly in oblique narration, now obsolete except in dialect. Fabyan, *Chronicles* (1515), "Obedience that he should owe (i.e. owed) to the See of Canterbury." Shakspeare, *Taming of the Shrew*, III. ii. 160, "When the priest should ask if Katherine should be his wife." George Fox (1624-1691) *Journal* (1694), "a slander . . . that the Quakers should deny Christ." Mr. Bensusan thinks that this use has lingered with us because it is guarded. The Essex labourer and small tradesman have a way of avoiding direct speech at times.

² "Swounds, show me what thou't do. Woot weep? woot fight? woot fast? woot tear thyself?" (Shakspeare, *Hamlet*, V. i. 297). Here *woot* is *wilt*.

³ A similar use is that of *come*, an elliptical conjunctive, representing a worn-down temporal or conditional clause—"I shall be fower score come Michaelmas;" "come a storm, I could get them seeds in." This has a literary record from 1420, and is used by Shakspeare.

Verbs in *sk*, *sp*, *st* form the third person singular of the present in *es*, which is pronounced as a separate syllable, *ask-es*, *clasp-es*, *cost-es* (cf. p. 43). *Ask* has past tense and past participle *ast*; and the ancient forms *ax*, *axed* are commonly used. The two forms, *ask* and *ax*, are equally ancient, with a literary history from the 10th century.

One or two peculiar verb constructions deserve mention.

Tense and person inflexions are generally disregarded. (See pp. 41, 42 and examples *passim*).

A singular verb is commonly used with a plural subject—"some o' the gays has been tore out o' that book"; "them housen has all got to come down." Many examples of this occur in Shakspeare—"what manners is in this?" "there is no more such masters"; and even "my old bones aches," "his tears runs down his beard like winter drops." It is possible that the apparently singular verbs here are survivals of a Northern O.E. plural form in *s*. (Abbott, *A Shakespearian Grammar*. Macmillan).

A curious use is that of the third person for the second in addressing a person. Instead of the conventional "how are you?" we say "how does Muster — howd?" and the use is common in any connexion.

The Cockney use of the third person for the first and second, as in "I ups and hits him," is rare with us, except in the usual "says I," "thinks I."

Take is often redundant, coupled with almost any other verb—"I took and clent the grease off of it." See Dictionary.

Want is used with the conjunctive—"I don't want ye should." *Wish* and *choose* (see Dictionary) are similarly used. "Ye don't want t' git cross about it" means "you need not—." "Ye don't want t' meddle o' that" means "you had better not—." To *want for* is to stand in need of. "He don't want for nothin', do he sh'd ha't."

Doubt is used with the sense of *think* or *am afraid*—"I doubt there's suff'n else the matter."

The intransitive use of *eat*—"I like that froze mutton; that eat s' tender"—has the high authority of Shakspeare and Goldsmith.¹

The verb *use* is disrespectfully treated, as in "I can't do it now like I used to could," "used to was," "he didn't used to be so foolish." Such solecisms, due to ignorance or negligence, no vagary of the literary language supports.

¹ *All's well*, I. i. 175. "Like one of our French wither'd peares . . . it eates drily"; *Vicar of Wakefield*, ch. xvi.: "if the cakes at tea eat short and crisp."

ADVERBS AND CONJUNCTIONS

For the adjectival form of the adverb see Adjectives above.

As, adverb and conjunction, has some queer uses. As an adverb it is used redundantly, "I see him go by as yes'd'y." This is simple; but the same cannot always be said of *same as* similarly used. The uses of this phrase are manifold and baffling. Sometimes, as an adverb, it is merely redundant, like the simple *as*, for which it might be substituted in the above example. Sometimes it appears to have some explanatory force, implying "I mean," "for instance," "like that," etc.,—"he allus give me suff'n, same 's at Christmas"; "they was wunnerful kind to 'em, same as the cottage folks"; here the phrase explains the "they." "I sowed my seeds middlin' forrad t' year, same as carrots"; "if ye don't cut off same as them leaves, they on't shoot n' more." As a conjunction it may be causal, conditional, concessive, almost anything—"I can't have n' meat now, same as I ain't got the money"; "they'll do all right, same's you let 'em alone"; "she do treat the poor lil thing shimeful, sime's that was dut." Mr. Bensusan in *Father William* and his other rustic studies gives us some examples of this nimble phrase, among the more brilliant of which are "same's a man's a parson, he gotter wash his hands sometimes"; "I put a stamp on, same as I needn't."

For the relative use of *as* see Pronouns. *As* is used with superlative force in such phrases as "as black as black," "can be" being implied. As a conjunction it is equivalent to *that*—"I dunno as that ain't the best o' the two." *As how* is used with the meaning of *that*—"seein' as how they told me theirselves." This is a dialect use only, but the preceding use of *as* has early literary authority.

Bein' (being), meaning *since*, is used with or without *as*—"I bought a goodish passel o' plums t' year, bein' (as) they was so reasonable."

Equally as might be set down as a modern vulgarism, but that literary people, e.g. Jane Austen and F. W. Newman, use it.

It is somewhat surprising to find that the use of *like* in the sense of *as*, *as if* ("I done it just like you did"; "she took on like she couldn't stop"), which is usually condemned as vulgar or slovenly, has plenty of literary authority. But so it is, from the 16th century to the present. Shakspeare (*Pericles*, I. i. 163) has "like an arrow shot from a well-experienced archer hits the mark," and it is used by many recent writers of repute.¹

¹ The following sentence in a prominent article in a leading daily paper (Dec. 1918) makes one rub one's eyes—"Our horror of out-and-out conscription is nothing like it would be, if we know it." The strain of war-time has done some strange things.

Like appended to adjectives and adverbs is an interesting survival of ancient language, representing O.E. *-lice*, an adverbial suffix often confused with the adjectival suffix *-lic*. Of these the former persists in the modern adverbial suffix *-ly*; the latter in most adjectives has disappeared. Both are etymologically connected with *like*. Examples are "she come on me all sudden like," "he eat taters for his dinner, 'cos they're cheap like."¹ Dialect extends the use, as in "sposin' that was to jump, I should be skeered like." Its extension to verbs, as in "times he can do a bit in the garden like," is without authority. *Like* appears for *likely* in "more like he never see her," as in the archaic but still used *like enough*, *very like*, of literary speech.

Afore (*adv.*, *conj.*, and *prep.*) in dialect, as in literary history, is parallel with *before*, which has now in literary speech supplanted it. See Dictionary.

Ago is amplified by the addition of *that's* or *that ain't*—"she went away that's (or that ain't) two year ago."

An (*conj.*, *if*) is only used in the phrase "ifs an' ans." See Dictionary.

Anyways is an ancient form. It occurs in the present Prayer Book, and in Elizabeth's, in the Prayer for all Conditions of Men—"all those who are anyways afflicted or distressed in mind, body, or estate." (Cf. Nouns, Plurals, p. 43).

E'en (even) is a vague and elusive word, and seems to have no exact synonym. In answer to "can you do so and so?" the answer is "I dunno; I'll e'en try," that is, "anyhow I'll have a try." A more recondite use is "I e'en morsly (mostly) goo to bed about noine." Here it seems redundant. *E'en a'most* is used in some parts for *almost*.

Far. *Fer*, *fir*, *fur* are older forms, and were in literary use from the 12th century.

Kind of, *sort of*—"times she seem kind o' funny in the head"—are a mere colloquialism. They appear only in 19th century literature, e.g. Peggotty in *David Copperfield*, and always as a colloquialism.

Howsomever is a literary form, as ancient as the current *however* (c. 1300). (Cf. *Whatsomever*, Relative Pronouns, p. 47).

Some and *something* have an adverbial use—"that'ere table 's some rickety"; "my head aches suff'n cruel." Both have literary authority from the 16th century.²

Times is used in the sense of *sometimes*. (See example

¹ In literature this formation is not common, nor used by distinguished writers, but its use persists from the 15th century to the 19th.

² Writers of repute have "some better," "some richer," and the like. Shakspeare has "something nearer," and Swift "something singular," adverbially.

under *like* above). This elliptical use has some support in literature. *Time* is used as a temporal conjunction—"she took up along o' he time she was in service."

For an adverbial use of *that* see Pronouns (p. 47).

Here is used redundantly—"supper ain't over here nit afore noine o'clock"—somewhat as *idou* in Luke xiii. 16. "whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years."

There is used interjectionally in various undefinable connexions, e.g. "He come and spoke outrageous, but there! what's the good o' talkin' about it?"; as an expression of interest, surprise, or sympathy, at the end of an interlocutor's story—the equivalent of "think of that"—"he took an' hulled th' hull lot on th' owd bumby. There!"; or to correct a misstatement—" 'twas the master give me that—there! the missus."

For *hinder* (short *i*), *yonder*, see Dictionary.

Together, see Dictionary.

About is reduplicated in the phrase "about and about"—"where a ye bin together?" "oh, about and about."

A little is curiously used in reply to enquiry about an ailing person, "a little nicely,"¹ "a little middlin'."

Without is used as a conditional conjunction, meaning *unless*—"I dunno what's become of it, without some one's took it."

Because has the force of a final conjunction—"I come a puppus, 'cos I shouldn't miss ye." "He twist-es his head about, 'cos he shouldn't take nothing" was said of a sick man refusing food. The use is of high authority from the 15th century to the 17th. Caxton (1485) and Burton (*Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1621) have it; in Tindale's Bible (1526), Matt. xii. 10, is "they axed him . . . because they might acuse him;" and in the Authorised Version (1611), Matt. xx. 31, "the multitude rebuked them, because they should hold their peace," unfortunately altered by the Revisers to "that they might."

So is similarly used by ellipse of *that*—"I started middlin' forrad, so I shouldn't miss ye."

Forwhy is used as *why*, as a sequel to a statement requiring explanation—"an' I'll tell ye for why." O.E. *hwí* is the instrumental case of the interrogative *hwá*, (who), *hwæt*, (what). *Forwhy* was in literary use till the 18th century,

¹ *Nicely* is often used as a quasi-adjective. You can say "she is nicely," or "she is getting on nicely." *Sadly* and *poorly* are always adjectival in this connexion. Other allied phrases are "pretty moderate," "about as common," and "among the middlin's." A frequent remark is that the patient is better, or pretty well, "in himself," meaning that his general health is satisfactory, while he suffers from some local ailment.

Swift (*Journal to Stella*—23 Dec. 1710), "I will tell you no more at present. Guess for why."

Only is a puzzling word. In "she don't do ut only to you" the meaning (except) is plain. Pepys (*Diary*—1664, 22nd April), has "My wife and I in their coach to Hide Parke, where . . . pleasant it was, only for the dust."

But other instances are not so simple. The preceding negative seems to make a muddle. In "he ain't bin gone only a few minutes," "I see her 'tain't on'y yes'd'y," and "that don't look only like a bit o' paper," the wording is confused and the meaning scarcely definable. Rid of the unnecessary negative, *only* would have its proper sense of *no more than, nothing but*. Negatives seem to be a muddling element in English, as in other languages, especially to untutored minds. Similar instances in Greek and French will occur to our readers. (Cf. *about*, Prepositions, and Negatives, below).

Of course is very freely used in narrative, appended to statements which the hearer by no means of course knows. But it is not more unreasonable than the "you know" of educated speech.

Directly is used as a conjunction. "I come out t'rec'ly I see ye." A queer adverbial expression is *directly minute*, an intensive combination—"come out o' that there slud t'rec'ly minut, don't I'll cop ye one."

Adverbs are coupled with adjectives by *and*—"them there plums was good and ripe," "that there war bread was beautifully and white last week." The use cannot be justified, but neither can such current expressions as "nice and warm."

Up is used verbally with ellipsis of the verb. "I up and answered she strite I did." *Up top*, at the top, upstairs, up to the top, is probably of dialect speech only.

But what is used with a sort of negative force—"I ain't agoin' to believe but what he done ut"; "is he happy? I dunno but what he is;" and more elusively, "you can't do a swear but what he'll cop ye." Sometimes a negative is added—"I ain't so poorly but what I can't get out, come a sunny day."

Negatives are doubled and redoubled and multiplied—"I never took nawth'n, nor nobody else nuther"; "no nor never on't."¹ A curious phrase is "not t' blame ye nuther," expressing approbation of a narrator's action.

¹ "He never yet no vileinye ne said in all his life unto no maner wight" (Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, Group A, Prologue, 70).

"Wherefore, madam, I pray you kiss me, and never no more" (Malory, *Morte d'Arthur*, (c. 1470) xxi. 10).

"Nay that cannot be so neither" (Shakspeare, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, II. iii. 18).

An unnecessary *not* is variously interpolated, as in "I dunno how long I ain't waited." Negative seems to attract negative, as in Latin *quin*, and in Greek $\mu\eta\ \omicron\upsilon$, follow a negative in the principal clause, and in certain French constructions, e.g., "*cette montagne est plus haute que je ne la croyais*"; "*je ne doute pas qu'il ne soit riche*." So again we say "tother things ain't ready, not the clothes and sech." "I can't hardly see to read." More irregular is "there on't be nob'dy come." *Nit* is a common form of *not*, *nit* 'it of *not yet*, *n'yit* and *nit* of *nor yet*.¹

Nor is used as *than* after comparatives—"that's suff'n better nor a mile from here." This *nor* is of obscure origin; it is not the same word as the negative *nor*.

PREPOSITIONS

About is strangely used in expressions of time, distance, number—"he ain't bin gone about an hour." Here there is confusion between "he has been gone about an hour" and "he has not been gone more than about an hour," caused, as is the case with *only* above, by the muddling negative.

Afore. See Adverbs.

Atween for *between* has high literary authority, being used by Spenser and Tennyson. (See example under Personal Pronouns, p. 46).

Along of in its sense of *with* has extended use. We say "acquainted along of," "interfere along of," "he ails cruel along o' his head," "what ha' ye done along o' yer taters t' year?" and, with the meaning *because of*, "that was all along o' you actin' so."

The O.E. preposition *an*, now *on*, and in composition in many words worn down to *a*, as in *abed*, *afoot*, *afloat*, *asleep*, is still thus freely used in dialect with the verbal substantive—"I ain't a goin' to do ut," and keeps the same form even before a vowel—"you've bin a over doin' of it."² It was generally used in old literary speech, e.g. John ii. 20, A. V., "forty and six years was this temple a building," which here the Revisers unhappily changed to "in building," though they spared "while the ark was a preparing" in I Peter iii. 20.

Of is used in curious variety, sometimes redundantly, sometimes with meanings of *with*, *upon*, etc., as in *along of*, *pleased of*, *turned of* (of age, "turned of forty," etc.), to *accept of*, *meet of*, *light of*, *happen of*, *feel of*, *smell of* (smell), *part of* (part with).

¹ *Yit* is an O.E. form (Chaucer and Wiclif) of *yet*.

² Cf. the similar use with the article *a*, above, p. 42.

and the like. So Chaucer has "depeynted of" (painted with), Thackeray "houses picked out of a lighter red" (*Vanity Fair*, ch. xlvii). Wiclif and Shakspeare and other old writers used it with such verbs as *accept*, *meet*, *find fault*, *fill*, *supply*. In "long o' comin'," it is probably confused with *a*, *an*, *on*, these prepositions often invading one another's province. Thus a mother of a large family will say, "Ye see, there's s' many to wait of"; and Thackeray (*Vanity Fair*, ch. xi.) has "so this old philanthropist used to make her equal run of her errands." (See *on*, below). *Of* is redundantly added to *off*, with *beg*, *borrow*, *buy*, and the like—"I bought it off o' he," and to transitive verb-nouns—"what's he bin a doin' of?" Of these the former has the authority of Shakspeare, Bunyan, and Steele, the latter of Shakspeare, Bunyan, Tindale, and Pepys.

Off is also used alone with *buy*, *borrow*, etc.

On takes the place of *of*—"the hull on't," "some on ye." So Shakspeare and other writers have "I'm glad on't," "the truth on it," "the best on it." *Of* and *on* are liable to confusion, both being reduced in common speech to *o'*.

PHONOLOGY

Here also, in pronunciation, we have many ancient survivals, either of literary or of dialect speech. If our local dialect sounds have changed in recent times, it is chiefly owing to Cockney infection, and probably that does not amount to much. I am conscious that the following notes are no satisfactory review of our local dialect sounds. Unscientific and incomplete, they invite correction and amplification. Those who would have an expert treatise must consult the big *Dialect Dictionary*, where the phonology of dialect generally is elaborately set out.

It must be observed that dialect sounds are not at all stereotyped. The examples given below represent rules as far as they go, but hard and fast rules there are not. Infinite shades of sound occur according to the characteristics of various speakers, and, generally, dialect pronunciation is highly arbitrary and inconsistent.

For instance the *a* sound in *James* and *eight* varies between the correct pronunciation and the Cockney *Jimes* and *ite*, through intermediate forms such as *Jah-ims* and *ah-it*. *Peace* shades off into *pace*; *you* and *Susan* into *yeew* and *Seusan*; *old* through *ode* into *owd*. *Nothing* by gradation becomes *nothin'*, *nawth'n*, *nawn*. And *yes* varies indescribably between

the proper form and sounds which seem hardly to have phonetic affinity with it—*ah*, *yea-ah*, anything that has the slightest similarity or connexion. But after all, how expect dialect to be precise? When educated people slur vowels as they do, giving vague indeterminate sounds, for instance, to *curtain*, *cupboard*, *victuals*, *waistcoat*, how can fault be found with *wurrunt*, *foolush*, *meetun'*, *puppus*, *yaller*, and so on? Why should dialect not make *haunt* *haant*, when literary speech makes *aunt* and *laundry*, *aant* and *laandry*?

VOWELS

Our local vowel sounds, as distinguished from those of modern accepted pronunciation, here set out, after a fashion, in such grouping as the lack of rules allows, well illustrate the wildly variable and arbitrary ways of dialect speech. But let us not forget that, heedless or unconscious of rules as dialect is, it is only a degree more so than educated speech.

A has the sound of the *a* of *father* in *chaamber*, *gaap* (gape), *haansel* (handsel), *snaasty* (snaisty), *snaath* (snaith),¹ and so has *ai* in *Braantree*. *Swath* is pronounced *swawth*, and *ajar* *ajaw*; but conversely *causeway*, *crawl*, *haulm*, *haunt*, *jaw*, *sprawl*, *sauce*, are *caacy* (or *caazy*), *craal*, *haam*, *haant*, *jaa*, *spraal*, *saace*. *Draught*, a cart-shaft, is *drawt*, but, meaning a drawing, is *draff*. *Wave* is *weave*, *scare* *skeer*, *thatch* *thetch*. *Wrap*, *thrash* (*thresh*) and *starve* are *wrop*, *thros*, and *storve*. *Stamp* is sometimes *stomp*. *Fallow* is *foller*, and *warrant* *wurn't*. *Scarce* is *scace*¹; *audacious* *owdacious*. For *flea* (flay) see Dictionary.

A commonly approaches and reaches the Cockney *i* sound, as in *tible* (table), *Ida* (Ada), *Kite* (Kate). One may hope that this ugly sound is not indigenous. It seems to be used much more by younger than by older people, which indicates recent importation.

E and *ea* are sounded as *a* in *arly* (early), *arnust* (earnest), *arth* (earth), *arrant* (errand), *hard* (heard),¹ *yarb* (herb), *yarn* (earn),³ *yaller* (yellow). *Scream* is *scrame*, but *squeak* and

¹ Chaucer and Wiclif have *maad*, and the latter *taak*, for *made*, *take*. *Chaamber* seems to represent the Norman-French sound, other instances of which will be found later in *oinon* (p. 63), *bever* (from O.F. *beivre*, now *boire*), *largess*, *dissabil* (p. 68), *Gronkers* (p. 66). Adlington—*The Golden Asse* (*Metamorphoses*) of Apuleius, 1566 (Grant Richards, 1913), has *skase* (scarce) and *harde* (heard).

² Our choir, in singing "all meanelly wrapped in swathing bands," pronounces *swathing swawthing*. They are at least consistent, *swath* and *swathe* being of the same origin, a fact which accepted speech heeds not.

³ See p. 63.

squeal keep the normal sound. *Ear, here, hear, queer, rear,* are often pronounced with the vowel sound of *bear*; but *dear, fear, severe, year,* usually have the normal sound.¹ Short *e* is pronounced as *ee* in *eend* (so Wiclif has it). *Ea* is as *e* in *gret* (great), and as *ee* in *treed* (tread). Short *i* takes the place of *e* in *git* (get), *hin* (hen), and *'it* (yet), of *ea* in *dif* (deaf), of *ee* in *fit* (feet), *ship*,² *sid*, *strit*, and of *ie* in *fild*. (Cf. the converse under *i* below).

There is lengthened out into *they-er*. (Cf. *four* and *more* under *o* below).

E sounds are commonly as *a* in some words, as in *beseech*, (second syllable), *peach, teach*. *Better* commonly approaches *butter, ferule* is *furrel*, and *Pleshey, Plushey*.

I is sounded as *a* in *sarcumstance*; as *e* in *spet* (spit), *steff* (stiff), *peck* (pickaxe), and *dedn't, dent* (didn't); as *u* in *Muster* (Mr.), *rabbut, foolush*, and such words, *squurel, squut*; as *oo* short in *'ooll* (will), (see p. 51, note). *Dirt, first, turnip,* and the like, are *du, fust, tunnup*, etc. Long *i* is universally more or less *oi*; but conversely *oi* is sometimes long *i* as in *moist, boil, soil*, etc.

O, oa, and ou are sounded *oo* in *goo, boo-y, coorse* (for *coarse* and *course*; *coarse* is also *coase*), *foorce, rool* (past tense of *roll*), *Roothing* (Roding),³ but *groove* is *grove, moat mot*, and *poach* sometimes *porch*. *O* becomes *i* in *bullick*, and *nit* (not);⁴ *ow* in *owd, cowd*, and the like; *moulds* (garden soil—always plural) is *mowlds*. *O* and *oo* are as *u* in *hull* (whole), *stuvver* (stover—see Dictionary), *shuk* (shook), *spunfl* (spoonful), *sut* (soot), *thurrin* (foreign), *wuss* (worse), *wuk* (work), *wum* (worm); *poor* is pronounced *pore* (so Chaucer and Wiclif write it); *four* and *more* are *fow-er* and *mo-wer*, *ow* in the former sounded as in *power*. *Horse* is *hoss, sort, so't*, and *force* (see above) is sometimes *foss*, but *toss* is *torse*, and *coffin, corfin*. *Drought* is pronounced *drort*. *Brow*, the edge of a ditch, is *brew* (broo).⁵ *Ou* and *ow* commonly have the mean Cockney sound which one is at a loss to write; *house, town, Bowler* (a common farm-horse name) are *ha-use, hayuse*, (how represent it?), etc. Final *ow* has an indeterminate *er* sound in *yaller* (yellow), *feller, Dunmer*, etc. *Felloe* is pronounced *felly*. *Solder* is *sodder* and *sawder*, both ancient forms.

¹ Here again dialect is no more inconsistent than literary speech with its *gear* and *near, pear* and *tear*.

² "What ship was it, Horrocks? and when did you kill?" (Thackeray, *Vanity Fair*, ch. viii.).

³ See note, p. 66.

⁴ *Kiver* (cover) is no freak. It represents *kevere*, a literary form of the 14th–16th centuries, used by Chaucer.

⁵ The most ancient spellings (10th–12th centuries) are *brú* and *bruw(e)*.

The *o* in *stone*, *most*, *post* seems to be peculiar, midway between the normal *o* of *stone* and that of *done*; and in composition it practically disappears, the *n* and *s* becoming vocalic (see p. 62). Thus we say *doorp'st* and *grinst'n* (grindstone).

U is pronounced as *a* in *tarn* (turn),¹ *hardle*, *tharrer* (furrow); as *e* or *i* in *sech*, *sich* (such)—Wiclif has *siche*—and *shet* (shut). *Blue*, *Susan*, you are *ble-ew*, *Se-usan*, *ye-ew*.

Some of our vowel sounds, such as *a* rendered approximately *i*, and *ou*, *ow* mouthed into an unwritable form, are undoubtedly ugly and regrettable enough. One wonders to what extent they are due to Cockney infection. Probably to some extent they are indigenous, and are part of our contribution to the Cockney tongue. But in Cockney-land they have degenerated, and have come back to us even uglier.²

The collect for the twenty-first Sunday after Trinity, as rendered by school children, is a good example of such displeasing sounds—"Grant, way besaich thay, marcifful Lord, to thoi fitheful pape pardon and pace, that thy may be cleansed from all their sins, and serve thay with a quoiut mind." Thus after the effort of seventy years of elementary education to refine the vernacular tongue. The above rendering may seem something of a caricature, and certainly not all children produce it in this grossest form; but it does represent more or less what child after child in a class will produce. And they cannot be induced to improve it considerably. Habit or vitiated organs of speech seem to make them generally incapable of uttering the correct sounds.

In one matter at any rate, that of the aspirate, we are almost blameless.³ The havoc made of the letter *h* by the Cockney had not its origin in Essex.

CONSONANTS

Here we have not such a maze of sounds to deal with as

¹ But *turn* is more usually *tu'n* (see p. 63).

² The amount of Cockney infection in our rural districts is hard to estimate. No doubt it varies largely. It is natural to expect it in districts traversed by trunk railways and main roads. I am told that in the Stort Valley, along the Great Eastern Railway main line to Cambridge, it has ousted the native dialect as far as Little Hadham, near Bishops Stortford; and probably it has gone further. Enquiry throughout the county would probably show that districts have suffered in proportion to their nearness to trunk lines and main roads. And, of course, the deadening influence of London is seen for many miles out. Remote parishes, such as many of ours in Mid-Essex, seem to be little affected.

³ I believe our old people are entirely blameless. But the Cockney virus seems to be stealing in. One certainly does find here and there "d'ye 'ear," "look 'ere," and the like.

we had with vowels. Most of the consonants have their normal sounds. Some are survivals of ancient sounds which have passed out of literary use; of the rest, some are distinctly irregular and vagarious.

L becomes vocalic, that is, acquires a vowel sound, in *vitt'l*, *dreff'l*, and in place and personal names ending in *-field*, as *Brumf'l* (Broomfield), *Chipperf'l*. So with *d* (*rd*) in *forr'd* (forward), *blackb'd*, *hunn'rd* (hundred), *Chenshf'd*¹; *m* in *el'm*, *whel'm*, *yel'm*²; *n* in *fitt'n*³ and all words in *-ing*, and in words ending in *-stone*, as *grinst'n* (grindstone); *s* in *mons's* (monstrous), and *s'stifcate* (certificate); *t* in *ef't*, pronounced *effut* (*eft*)⁴; *y* in *t'year* (this year).

In all these the sound produced by the vocalisation of the consonants is that of the indeterminate vowel to which phonologists assign the symbol *ə*, a sort of blurred *e* sound, which in our anomalous language occurs in multitudes of words, ousting the proper sound of vowels. Thus it usurps the place of *a* in *brutal*, of *ai* and *oa* in *waistcoat*, of *ou* in *colour*. Dr. Wright in his *Dialect English Grammar*, attached to the *Dialect Dictionary*, states that its sound varies between that of *er* in *better* and that of *e* in the German *gabe*.

Other consonantal vagaries, or survivals, are the addition of a terminal *d* in *drownd*, *gownd*, *scholar'd*,⁵ but conversely *pound* loses its *d* and becomes *p'n*; and of an initial intensive *s* in *scotch* (which also drops its *r*), *scrouge* (crowd), *scrumple*, *scrunch*, *squench*. A curious final *s* is added to *dollop*, *finnick*, *noodle*, *slink*, *spuffle* (see Dictionary) and this form, *dollops*, etc., is the usual form of these words. *Anywhere*, *nowhere*, *somewhere* have the same unauthorized appendage, and surnames (p. 65) are similarly treated. *T* is added in *varmint*, *onst* (once), pronounced *wunst*, *twicet* (twice—a monosyllable), and takes the place of *d* in *arrant* (errand).⁶ *Thrave* is always *trave*, the northern form from the 13th century. Medial *f* disappears in *arter* and *croat* (croft), and *g* in *si'nify*; *l* in

¹ Camden (*Britannia*—1600) has "Chelmerford vulgo Chensford."

² Pronounced distinctly *ellum*, *whellum*, *yellum*.

³ *Fitt'n* is a curious irregular form of *footing* (footmarks). The plural *feet* is pronounced *fit*.

⁴ Here dialect is historically correct, the O.E. form being *efet*.

⁵ The excrescent *d* of *drownd* has literary parallels in such verbs as *sound* (O.E. *son*, M.E. *soun*), *astound*, *compound*, etc., the past participle being converted into a secondary verb. *Gownd*, *scholar'd*, are apparently formed by analogy, and are not literary. The added *d* is perhaps due to an instinctive easing of speech, particularly when an initial vowel follows. *Drownd*, *drownded*, are used by Swift and other writers of note.

⁶ Forms with terminal *t* were in literary use from the 16th century to the 18th.

showder (shoulder), *a'ready*, *a'most*, *on'y*; *r* in *sca'ce*,¹ *coase* (coarse), and in very many words containing *ur*, as in *bu'n* (burn), *bu'st*, *chu'ch*, *distu'b*,² *fudder* (further), *puppus* (purpose), *tunnup* (turnip); (similarly *sort* is *so't*); *t* in *Bans'n* (Barnston), *brims'n*; *w* in *awk'ard*; initial *w* in *on't*, *ooll* (will), *'ood*, *'oman*. In dropping the final *g* of words ending in *ng*, and in the use of the miscalled euphonic *r*, as in "the idear of it," "Sasar Ann," "drawrin'," etc., dialect speech is no worse than that of many persons who consider themselves educated. A curious use of this last irregularity is seen in "b'rimself" (by himself). *D* takes the place of *th* in *farden* (farthing), and *fudder* (further); and *t* of *d* in *t'rec'ly* (directly). *V* has the sound of *f* in *leaf* (leave), *shuff* (shove), *thiefes*, *Ollufer* (Oliver),³ and *f* of *th* in *tharrer* (furrow), and *thurrin* (foreign). But *Roding* (see note, p. 66) is pronounced *Roothing*. *J* takes the place of *ch* in *jink*, and of *sh* in *jingle* (shingle) (see Dictionary).

FURTHER OBSERVATIONS

A few notes must be added concerning the above words and some others in dialect use.

Yarn (earn) and *yarb* (herb)⁴ are no vagaries, being ancient forms which were in literary use, the former from the 10th century to the 16th, the latter in the 15th and 16th.

Farden (farthing) has no literary authority, but it has good companions in *burden* and *murder*, which have collateral literary forms *burthen* and *murther*. *Fudder* (further) has the support of Earle (*Microcosmography*, 1628) who uses the form *furder*. So *smother* is pronounced *smudder*. *Heighth* has full literary authority. It is in fact the original form corresponding to *breadth* and *length*. And so have *invite* (noun), with the stress on the first syllable, and *contra.ry*, *mischie.vous* and *mischie.vious*,⁵ *illus.trated*, and *interes.ting*.

Other unusual forms are *sut* (soot) and *vause* (vase), which are now archaic, but our grandparents used them. *Sparrow-grass* and *laylock* had literary vogue in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Dialect has but substituted the form *sparrer*. *Oinon* (onion) is used by Chaucer; it is an interesting adoption of the Norman-French form *oignon*. *Upsadown* is

¹ See note, p. 59.

² Further shortened to *stub*. See Dictionary.

³ Wiclif sometimes renders Olivet *Olyfeet*. *Ollifer*, *Olefer*, occur in old registers.

⁴ See p. 59.

⁵ But *covetious* (covechous), and *tremendious* (tremendjus) are without authority.

used freely by Wiclif. *Often* is sometimes pronounced as it is spelt, presumably the ancient mode.

Many forms, as *gie* (give), *treed* (tread), are noted in the *New English Dictionary* as of dialect use only, and many current dialect forms are not recognised as ancient. But, as has been said above, it must be borne in mind that records of dialect speech are comparatively few. Probably nearly all our dialect forms and uses can rightly claim ancient descent, though they cannot prove it. (See p. 41).

The following forms, obviously vagaries, are constant, and probably ancient—*acrost*, *a'ready*, *athout* (without), *arter*, *bumby* (by and by) with stress on the *by*, *ast* (ask), *cast* (cask), *curous* and *curoosity*, *hully* (wholly), *nuther* (neither). Of *puppus* (purpose) it should be remarked that the noun is so pronounced, but the verb is *purpo.se*, pronounced as *propose*. Children say "stedfastly *purpo.sing* to lead a new life" (Catechism).

Atonic *a*, pronounced more or less as the indefinite article, does manifold duty, representing *I, have, in, of, on, with*. "Count a couldn't a got a moit a bacca a Sunday" contains four of these; *in* is represented in *a two*—"them roots has got ter be cut a two every year"; and the following local anecdote supplies the sixth. A man who used to "swear wond'r'in" was thus addressed by his wife—"ah yah, boo-y, spet ut out. Ye 'on't goo t'heaven a that in ye."

House in composition usually takes the form of *hus* (h's), which, for convenience, not from neglect of the aspirate, is shortened to *-us*. We say *ale'us*, *bake'us*, *beer'us*, *brew'us*, *cow'us*, *hen'us*, *pest'us*, *shay'us*, *wash'us*, *wood'us*, etc. *Bellhouse*, a farm, is *Bell'us*. A newly built house of a superior type is at once named by neighbours *New'us*, and so remains for generations, whatever its occupants may wish it to be called.

Long words, and such as are unfamiliar, or involve difficulty in pronunciation, though it be of the slightest, are variously simplified in disregard of literary usage. Instances are *anenemy* (anemone), *broccolo*,¹ *catastrophe* (pronounced as a trisyllable with stress on the first syllable), *cert'nitly* (also *sart'ny*), *contro.versy*, *conval.escent*, *dreff'l*, *diseased* (deceased), *drawf* (dwarf), *duberous* (dubious, suspicious), *ecentric*,² *ex.amination*, *forrad*, *illigimate*,³ *marter* (tomato), *tater*,

¹ *Broccolo* is linguistically correct, as the singular of the Italian plural *broccoli*; but apparently the dictionaries do not recognise it.

² So we say *accept*, *eception*.

³ "An elegant (illegitimate) child" is an erratic instance which our dialect may well disown.

mis-able, monsus, odny (ordinary),¹ *ollus* (always), *oppu.ry* (arbitrary), *prehaps, pres'n'y* (presently), *prespiration, prosperous* (phosphorus), *reco'nize, roblum*,² *Sad-d'y* (Saturday), *salfasy* (salsafy), *sheen* (machine), *srivel, sinify* (signify),³ *s'stifcate, sparrer, tharrer* (furrow), *substraction, tamarind* (imagined as a compound of *rind*), *temp'ry, thurrin* (foreign), *Wes'nd'y* (Wednesday), *yes-d'y*. Naturally the War has brought into prominence a crop of erratic words. "I got to join m' corpse" is not the reflection of a disembodied spirit, but, a soldier's remark. "Conscience rejector" is almost too humorous to be true; but genuine it is. Unit becomes *unite*, civilian *civilized*, furlough *furlong*, platoon *spittoon*, mine-sweeper *mind-sweeper*.⁴ Medical terms are of course the great stumbling-block. These are reserved for later comment.

Of surnames Hamilton is pronounced *Hamilton*, Craig is *Cragg*, Matthews *Matthus*, Burr *Barr*, Robson *Roberson*. Hammond for some mysterious reason is rendered *Hammett*. Leach is *Letch*, on the analogy of *reach, retch*. And, of course, there are many other perversions. The name Mortier, pronounced *M'teer*, is presumably a French survival. Puffett is a recent French name, *Pauffet*.

An adventitious *s* is freely added to surnames, mostly monosyllabic names, as to Gold, Cock, Root, Salmon. The reason is obscure. Perhaps there is an unconscious idea of the common patronymic form of surnames in *s*; or it may be the similar *s* of *dollops*, etc. (See p. 62).

Christian names are freely simplified, as *Dan'l, Robb't, Davud, Will'm, 'Liza, Mariar Ann*. The good old biblical names are seldom given now. They are superseded by vain modern things, names of flowers and gems, heathen goddesses, geographical names, or alien names of supposed attractive sound, such as *Doris, Ida, Iris, Ivy, Pearl, Gladys*, and so on. *Philemon* and *Eunus* (Eunice) are but memories; Abraham, Isaac, David, Solomon, Phoebe, and the like have almost gone, and Honor (a woman's name) is a thing of the past. Of course corrupt vowel pronunciation renders *Ada Ida*, and *Ida Oida*. *Theodosia* is sensibly shortened to *Doshy*, and *Kezia* is familiarly *Kizzy*.

¹ The remarkable form *unodny* (extraordinary) is also used. *Ordinary* and *arbitrary* (*oppu.ry*) have stress on the penultimate.

² *Roblum* is the sensible shortening of the unnecessarily difficult *Myrobalan*, a locally common plum.

³ The termination *-fy* seems to appeal to the vernacular mind. *Argufy* and *magnify* are used as synonyms of *signify*. See Dictionary.

⁴ The War has brought us a small crop of foreign words. I heard a smallish farm-boy lately say "Mercy boko"; and "trez beans" has occurred. Probably, like many exotics, they will dwindle out.

Place-names are also mauled for convenience of pronunciation. Thus we have of neighbouring or familiar parishes, *Chensf'd* or *Chenshf'd*,¹ *Badder* (Baddow), *Dunmer*, *Braantree*,² *Coxall* (Coggeshall), *Ba'ns'n* (Barnston), *Brumf'l* (Broomfield),³ *Mazhbury* (Mashbury), *Mowlsam* (Moulsham), *Winnig'l* (Willingale), *Bovinger* (Bobbingworth).² *Sawbridgeworth* is *Saps'th*, and; erratically, *Sapsted* and *Sapsford*. In most of the Roding³ names the *Roding* is usually suppressed. We say simply *Barnish* (Berners), *Aythrop*, *Leed'n*. But *High Roding* and *White Roding* keep the common name. Probably all these are ancient renderings. *Banson* appears in ancient registers; and *Sapsworth* has become a surname.

Names of fields, farmhouses, and hamlets are similarly treated. Of High Easter names, Pentlow End and Acreland Green, of the maps, are commonly *Pantle Eend* and *Aglan Green*. But map-names are often corruptions of ancient forms, to which the vernacular form is nearer. For instance, Lofty Green is pronounced *Lusty*, which closely enough represents the old form *Lovety*. On the other hand if, as seems not unlikely, Acreland represents Algarland, Acreland is the better form. Modern corruption sometimes makes it *Egglan*. Stagden becomes *Stag'n*. Fox and Crows, a small farm, is a puzzle. Whether it is a corruption, and of what, let experts say. Why the dignified Bourn's (a farm) became the ugly-sounding *Bones's*, I fail to see. Ounsley Green (Barnston) was always so called until a few years ago. It is now dressed up as Hounslow or Onslow, whether rightly or not I have no means of telling.

Grismal Green (Felsted) is the present vernacular rendering. The maps have it Gransmore, which is near enough to the 16th century Grindsmore. *Gronkers* (a farmhouse) is an interesting presentment of the ancient Grandcourt's, a Norman-French family name. *Pristy* (a field) is Priestfield. *Bannister Green* is properly Burlongstye Green. Burlong's Mead occurs in documents of the 16th century. The name was corrupted in that century to *Burnestie*, and shortened to *Bunsty*. The proper spelling is retained in old maps, and in parish books till the nineteenth century. In Little Dunmow, Rookwoods is *Ruckets*, and Bouchiers *Bouchers*. *Homely*

¹ See note, p 62.

² Braintree appears as *Branketre* in an Edward II. document, (Jusserand, *English Wayfaring Life in the Middle Ages*. Unwin, 1912 Edn., App. iv.), and as *Branchetreu* in the Domesday Survey. Our dialect also preserves the Domesday spellings *Brumfelda* and *Bubin-georda*.

³ The "Rodings," pronounced Roothing, are a group of eight small parishes to the west of our district, fringing the river Roding.

represents the ancient *Hormäl̄y*, whatever that means. There is stress on the last syllable, as in *Ardingly*. It is of course possible to give here only a meagre selection of names, just to illustrate dialect rendering.

So also of field-names, which are sometimes the most baffling of all. What shall be said of *Calais*, *Valangates* (pronounced *Vol'ng'ts*), *Konjohn's Hole* (variously *Congin's* and *Conger's*), and *Job Street*? Perhaps the first is *Challis's*, and the last *Job's Treat*, sarcastically applied to a poor field. *Playstall*, the High Easter village playground, is *Plaas'l*. Such are a few examples, from High Easter only. The spellings are those of the Tithe Survey. *Croat* is the local dialect form of *croft*, and *ware*, which appears in one or two field-names, is presumably *weir*. See Dictionary.

Farm-horse names add little to our matter, but are perhaps worth inclusion. The ordinary names are few and constant. The commonest are *Bowler*, *Tinker*, *Boxer*, *Smiler*, *Punch*, *Blossom*, *Tulip*, *Violet*, *Short*, *Captain*, *Kitty*, *Darby*, *Dodman*, *Depper*, *Duke*, *Prince*. These of course are subject to the ordinary dialect mode of pronunciation, *Violet* being *Voilut*, and *Tulip* *Tewlup*. *Dodman* is presumably an East Anglian importation, meaning snail. *Depper* is a puzzle; perhaps it is *Dipper*, analogous to *Boxer*, *Bowler*, *Tinker*. I am told that the name is given only to a mare, and an active one. *Duke* is used for both horse and mare.

It is interesting to note that we are still at work producing new words and forms, mauling the language. This we have as much right to do as had our forefathers, so long as we eschew modern vulgar slang, and Cockney infection, and affectation, which, however, are increasing dangers. The verb "to chapel," the Dissenters' equivalent of "to church" (women after child-birth), *nubble* (to nibble), *pindly* (used of weakly plants), *twingle* (twig), *sheen* (to work with the threshing machine), *temperified* (of bad weather), *preachation*, *inquiration*,¹ *pricker* (a prickle), appear to be new forms, or are at any rate not recorded in the dictionaries. *Auctioneerer* has no authority, but it is no worse than *electioneerer*, which is a dictionary word.

Special rarities, met with here and there, but not in common use, due to lack of book-learning and to misconception of words heard, are *aspostolic* (apostolic), *cabinet* (carbonate), *insault* (a mixture of insult and assault), *patriarchal* (patriotic), *sectionary* ("him as digs the graves"), *martyred* (murdered) ("that was give me by m'pore sister what was martyred at sea"). "Them bloomin' oranges" might be thought to be

¹ *Ruination* has literary authority from the 17th century.

modern slang. It is not, but a misconception of the unfamiliar *Blenheim*. An intermediate form *Blemmum* is sometimes used. "This here ramberin'" is, I believe, the invention of a certain unlearned and rather deaf old man. He applied it to the wood-work of a rough pergola, misconception converting *rambler* into the name of that on which it grows. The same old man calls curly kail "edicated greens," an unaccountable expression, unless "variegated" was dimly in his mind. With reference to the great railway strike of the autumn of 1919, he remarked, "Count there's goin' t' be a resolution in th' owd country." And so by him, generally, mysterious words of educated speech are converted into manageable forms. Petrol becomes *fetile*, demurrage *marriage*, scion *science*, fenugreek *finigig*. His *still* for distil is an ancient word, and may have been preserved in dialect. *Noclate* (presumably for inoculate), used of garden crops deteriorating, is a mystery. Lately he brought me a plant of henbane, and asked its name. "Oh, handbag, is ut?" So his imperfect hearing took it. Told again and again, he retained it as handbag, and so will keep it.

Quite simple words are sometimes very oddly used. An old woman, who, as school-cleaner, had school upon her brain, had a way of using the word *class* to describe any kind of meeting on the school premises—an entertainment, a lecture, a "social evening," even a whist-drive or a Parliamentary Election. The last she spoke of as "that there votin' class."

Of affectation there is not much, but it is noticeable in superior individuals, who, hankering after grand words, are sometimes led into absurdity.¹ *Reasonable* is unnecessarily used for *cheap*. *Indifferent* and *arbitrary* are referred to below (p. 71). One has even met with *sangfroidness* and *hoteer* (*hauteur*), and with "he enjoys bad health." On the other hand *dissabil* (undress attire) is no word of affectation; it is a long and honorably established word, with a literary record from the 17th century. (See Dictionary). To *dorn out*, adorn, arrange the furniture and ornaments of a room, is probably blameless, though the *Dialect Dictionary* seems not to recognise it.

Allied to these, but due rather to mistaken delicacy than to affectation, are the use of euphemism and the figure called by grammarians "litotes." These are a marked feature of our modern vernacular. Strong downright words are avoided,

¹ Surely modern affectation stinks in one's nostrils, when one sees a notice posted in a shop window "Wanted, a respectable young lady as errand girl," and when *charwoman* becomes *charlady*.

and mild substitutes used, as *gone* for dead, *scent* for stink,¹ *queer* for mad, *simple* for imbecile or of slight intellect, *good stuff* for dung, and the like. So to *talk to*, a weak substitute for to make love. "I 'mos' forgit" means "I don't remember." Euphemistic expressions are commonly used of sick persons. "If anything should happen to So-and-so" means "if he should die"; "not so well" means "distinctly worse." So, generally, *nasty* is replaced by "not very nice." "I dunno as I don't like so-and-so quite as well" means "I like it much better." "That's quite soft enough" means "it is too soft." A queer example is "that's quite as straight the other side," which means that this side is crooked. Similarly a cordial and gratifying invitation or offer is commonly answered by "I don't mind," not at all from indifference or lack of politeness, but from a sort of reserve which forbids direct acceptance and prompts this ungainly reply. The expression "if we should be spared" is quite common as a pious proviso, and is sometimes curiously used. "Them's all the brushes we shall want," I have heard said, "if we should be spared another year," as if, supposing we should not be spared, more brushes would be needed.

The expression "to oblige" is commonly used by persons of the charwoman type in a somewhat displeasing manner, when they are asked to undertake a job rather out of the common run—"I'll do it to oblige," she will say, though she be really not disinclined to do it. And "to oblige" will be reiterated *ad nauseam*. It seems to be the expression of supposed independence, and, perhaps, of a somewhat grudging disposition.

Slang words of course have found, and are finding, their way into our local speech; and the present generation, mixing more with travelled people, and now plentifully taught by returned soldiers, is adding largely to our slang vocabulary. But our elders' repertory has so far been a limited one of more or less respectable words. They have of course adopted *bike* and *pram*² (how could they help it?), *a treat* and to

¹ *Stink* must in no circumstances be used, and *scent* is commonly preferred to *smell*, whether good or bad.

² Of these the Oxford Dictionary, curiously, ignores *bike* but admits *pram* (first use 1884, *The Graphic*). The *Concise Oxford Dictionary* (1911) admits both. Other similarly clipped words of which we share the general colloquial use, are *nick* (credit—first instance 1642), *hack* (1700), *vet* (1842), *pub* (1865). The now vulgar *gent* I think we happily avoid. Curious to say, this abomination seems to have a fairly respectable record. But its early instances (16th century to 18th) are doubtful, being perhaps graphic abbreviations. It becomes clearly colloquial and vulgar in the first half of the 19th century.

stick it (first use, *Daily News*, 1899), and *blooming* (*McMillan's Magazine*, 1882); and the more respectable *copper*, policeman, (1859), *toff* (1851), and, handed on by their forefathers, *codger* (Squeers in *Nicholas Nickleby*, 1839), *a caution* (of U.S. origin, 1835), *topping* (Galt, 1822), to *crab* (1812), *trap* (1806), *rum* (1774), *jaw* (Smollett, 1748), *tip* (1706). *Bloody*, as an intensive adverb, dates from the Restoration, as an adjective only from 1840. To *cut* (make off) is used by Spenser (1570). To *hook it* has a curious record. An old meaning of *hook* is to move in twisting fashion—"all this company . . . hokyt out of hauyn" (*Destr. Troy*, c. 1400). Then no instance occurs till 1824, and *hook it* appears first in 1851. The use of *party* for person, now classed by N.E.D. as low colloquial or slang, had full literary authority till the 19th century. Bishop Andrewes, Ben Jonson, Wordsworth, J. H. Newman, and Dean Burgon stand for it. Apparently the detestable commercialism *up to date* was introduced to literature by Sir Charles Dilke in 1890; but we have scarcely adopted it. It is curious that so general a word as *humbug*, established since about 1750, should not have been generally adopted in our local vocabulary. For some obscure reason it is with us apparently regarded as an improper word, not to be used in serious talk. Its use in a sermon is thought most unseemly. *Awful*, *fearful*, and other such words colloquially used, have been dealt with above, under Adjectives. Such are specimens of our slang collection, and it is needless to enlarge the list. And, after all, who shall say, without arduous research, what is, and what is not, modern slang? ¹

For the above dates I am indebted to the *New English Dictionary*, and I would not leave this section of our subject

¹ In a letter to *The Times* (*Literary Supplement*, Nov. 7, 1918), Mr. M. H. Spielmann gives a list of over sixty slang expressions and colloquialisms commonly current with us now, which have come to us from Shakspeare and his contemporaries, either exactly in the sense in which they used them, or in adapted or extended use based upon theirs. Among these are *in the dumps*, to *bar* (object to), *gravelled*, *go to pot*, *prig*, *pinch and lift* (steal), *brass* and *chink* (money), *fire out* (drive out, dismiss), *the devil you do*, *slops* and *duds* (clothes), *stand in* (cost), *perk up*, *stow it*, *queer cove*, *slither* (be off), *blinking*. The last has recently come into general use, applied to anything as a mild substitute for stronger adjectives in *bl*—. Its origin is in *The Merchant of Venice*, where (II. ix. 54) the Prince of Aragon, opening the wrong casket, says "What's here? the portrait of a blinking idiot." He meant literally an idiot with blinking eyes. Later use made *blinking* a mere intensive addition to *idiot*, then combined it meaninglessly with any noun. *Gravelled* seems to have meant originally *run aground*, of a boat, stuck fast, and came to be used generally in the sense of *embarrassed*, *perplexed*. *As You Like It*, IV. i. 76, "gravelled for lacke of matter."

without grateful and admiring acknowledgement of the marvellous service which the editors have done us all, and especially the humbler sort of bookworm, by putting at our disposal that incomparable store of learning and research.

Dialect has also followed the general usage in slangily distorting meanings. *Chronic* is sometimes used correctly, of sickness, but oftener it has the degenerate meaning of very bad, applied to weather, roads, anything. In speaking of ailments it is sometimes applied to the affected part—"my head's suff'n chronic"; and misunderstanding even converts it into a noun—"the doctor says 'tis the chronic." *Cruel* is also transferred from the ailment to the suffering organ. Of course we say "she's got the faceache cruel," but we also say "my head's cruel," and even "I've been cruel this three weeks." Here one may suppose an ellipse of bad after cruel. *Comical* and *funny* are utterly perverted. They are used of eccentric persons, or of troublesome old people—"she's took comical again"; "father's that funny I dunno what to do with him." And *funny* is applied to anything strange or remarkable, even to tragic things. One hears "'tis funny you havin' the n'ralger like that," a remark that might annoy the sufferer, but that he notices nothing of its strangeness. The height is reached in "'twas funny his dyin' so sudden." The remark "there are some comical people about," called forth the reply "ah that'd be a funny world, if there wasn't comical people." Needless to say, these uses are more or less general among the uneducated, and common enough among the educated, of all parts. A London landlady once said to the writer "So-and-so's tea ain't so bad, but his sausages is cruel." But anyhow here are these uses among us, vulgarisms or whatnot, and we have to record them.

Less distorted, but misconceived, are *indifferent* (rude, ill-tempered), and *arbitrary* (pronounced *arbita.ry*), and *opputary* (disagreeable). One hears "she spoke to me wonderful indifferent"; "I never see sech a opputary old puss." *Simple* in the meaning of imbecile, feeble of intellect, has departed far from its primary sense of single-minded, honest. Like *humbug*, it is best avoided. "I see you've lost a customer" a tradesman said to me lately. He referred thus obscurely to the death of a farmer in a parish in which I had been doing temporary clerical duty.

Naturally it is in medical terms that misconception most runs riot, and countless strange forms result. Common renderings are *abser* (abscess), *ulster*, *browntitis*, *browntyphus*, *browncaters*, and many other forms, *infalenza*, *varico vein*, with variants, *harico*, *various*, *very coarse*, etc. *Pneumonia* appears as

peumonia, *ammonia* and *harmonia*, and the last also stands for *ammonia*. *Anæmia* becomes *enema* and *armenia*—"she's got bloodless armenia and 's got t' go to a Convulsion Home" is a typical example. *Inflammation* is often *information*—"the doctor he should say 'twas information of the cipplus" (*erysipelas*); and *emaciated* appears as *emercated*. The spelling *neuralger*, *n'ralger*, is justified by the adjective *n(eu)ralgery*. *Syringe* becomes *singe*—"I'm so hard o' hearin', I had t' get my ears singed." *Prelatic* for paralytic, *appoll.exy*, *paraxm* (paroxysm), are less common. *Primric*, a rarity, seems to represent a vague recollection of the doctor's diagnosis of *primary cataract*. Such misunderstanding of words and misreading of medical certificates are evidently responsible for "the doctor says 'tis the complication"; "the showder's decolated"; "the leg's vaserlated (ulcerated)"; "the doctor told me the bacteria 'd have to follow the diphtheria," and so on. "He 'on't do n' good," I have been told, "without he goes to a Confirmation Home; 'tis confirmation he's got." Confirmation is a bugbear to some of our people, but it is too bad to regard it as a deadly disease. The ailment was consumption. "So that's three things the pore little thing's got," said a woman at a cottage door; "there's ulster and cancer and gas somethin'. I can't rightly rec'lect what the nurse said 'twas." The visitor was suggesting gastric ulcer, when a loud voice from indoors, the husband's, intervened with "tain't cancer, that's abser, *abser*, I tell ye."

Such are a few instances gathered haphazard now and then. A doctor or a nurse could fill a fat volume with similar matter.

Thus ends our little grammar and notebook of local dialect forms and uses; and we must leave it, lamentably incomplete as it is. But the task is endless, and at least it may serve as an outline.

ADDENDA

- BACKHOUSE** : the back quarters of the house, whether a part of the house or detached. Given in D.D. as a north-country word, but it is established in Essex and East Anglia.
- BEDDED** : bedridden, ill in bed.
- BEHOLDING** : beholden, indebted. The word is used, apparently erroneously for *beholden*, by literary writers, including Caxton and Shakspeare, from the 15th century to the 18th.
- BLAME** : in imprecation. "Blame that owd cat"; "blamed if a don't——"; "that there blame(d) dog."
- BLARE** : used of the cry of certain animals, cattle, sheep, etc., and of crying children.
- BRAZZIL** (*brazzle*) : a Brazil-nut. The pronunciation is ancient. *Brazil*, however pronounced, was an English word long before Brazil was "discovered."
- COAX** : to stroke.
- COME OVER** : the colloquial expression "come over faint, giddy, sick," etc., is hard to analyse, but obvious of meaning.
- CROME** : a two-tined fork with the tines bent back hook-wise, used for raking matter from the further end of a cart. Often specifically, a "dung-crome."
- DISANNUL** : to do away with, e.g. a hedge, a fence, a plant, a cottage; to disturb—"let th' owd hin set where she loike; if ye disannul she, y'on't git no luck." A curious instance of a rather grand word put to homely use.
- DRAW** (*sb.*) : a money-payment demanded. "Poxed if a don't have a draw off o' he." So **DRAWER** : "he's a rare free drawer, but a wunnerful slow parter."
- DULL** : rainy. Usually "that's turned quite dull" implies rain.
- DUTFIN** : a cart-horse's bridle. An ancient East Anglian word, but not used in literature. It is not in N.E.D.

FAGOT : a small savoury cake or lump of chopped liver, or such matter, gravy, and bread crumbs. The word is treated by N.E.D. and D.D. as a secondary use of *fag(g)ot*, a bundle of wood (Fr. *fagot*, etymology uncertain). But possibly it is a distinct word, viz. It. *fegato*, liver, Lat. *ficatum* (*iecur*), the liver of animals fattened on figs (*ficus*). This view is given with diffidence, not being sanctioned by N.E.D. Apparently the first occurrence in literature is 1851, Mayhew, *London Labour* II. 227, where a definition is given.

FLECK (flick) : the fur of a rabbit, or any furry animal.

GALLUS (gallows) : intensive adverb—"gallus hot," "a gallus bad job."

GANG : a set, of calf's feet, etc.

GAY : variegated. A particoloured cow is a "gay cow." So of other animals ; and streaky butter is "gay butter."

GOTCH : an ailment of rabbits after a surfeit of green food, causing swelling of the body. A gotch is properly a big-bellied jug.

GO'-TIGHTLY (good-tightly) : considerably, thoroughly. "I wurr'nt I'll warm his jacket go'-tightly." *Tight* and *tidy* seem to be somewhat confused in dialect. Cf. the Dictionary.

HAND : "to make a hand of oneself," is to commit suicide. Cf. Dictionary.

HAZLE : see the Dictionary. To "hazle" is not quite the same as to dry. Of washing hung out you may hear "that on't dry, but that'll hazle a bit."

HEDGE-BETTY : a hedge-sparrow.

HUMMER : to neigh, or low, gently, of a horse or cow.

HUNCH : to slouch. You may say jocularly of yourself "Well, count a must hunch off now."

LARM'N (alarming) : intensive adverb. "She went on at me (a)larm'n." Cf. the Grammar, p. 44.

LITHE : used of pastry of too moist consistency in the making. If this is the literary *lithe*, its early meanings are soft, gentle, mild.

MARM (ma'am) : "a regular marm she is" ; of a stuck-up person.

- MOB** : to scold. " My husban' he *did* mob me."
- MUSHEROON** : a mushroom.
- NAME** : to mention. " Don't name ut " is said deprecating thanks for a kindness done.
- NANNY-WASHTAIL** : a water-wagtail.
- NOC'LATE** (inoculate) : the past participle is used of plants deteriorated by insect fertilization. See p. 68.
- NOVELTY** : a rarity, however old. Of an old piece of furniture it may be said " Well, that *is* a novelty." So of mistletoe immemorially established, if it is rare in the locality.
- OWN** : a dog at a rabbit's hole is said to " own to " the rabbit when it detects it inside.
- PATH** : to " make a path " means (1) to pay your way (" a couldn't never put by much, on'y jest made a path "); (2) to tidy up in housework.
- PAY** : to punish, cause suffering. " That did pay me shock'n, that owd sciatic ; " " I'll pay he."
- PLENTY** (*adv.*) : quite, fully. " Plenty close enough." For other uses of *plenty* see pp. 43, 44, 45.
- PRIDE OF THE MORNING** : when a day begins with slight rain, it will be said, " 'tain't on'y the pride o' th' morn'n'. That on't last."
- RARE** (rear) : of meat, underdone. A very ancient word (O.E. *hrér*), used of eggs from the 10th century. Distinct from *raw*. Stevenson, *The Wrong Box*, ch. xv, " roast beef done rare with roast potatoes."
- RENCH** (*intr.*) : to wash, percolate. It is said of manure on the soil " that'll rench down." *Rench* is a dialect variant of *rinse*, which has early forms *rynsche*, *rinche*.
- ROLL** : to fall. " They owd housen on't never roll down."
- SHANNY** : half-witted ; a stronger word than *silly* (Dict.).
- SISS** : to hiss. Used of a cat " swearing."
- SLUT** : a " slut-wash " is a house-wife's term for a rough wash, as distinguished from the solemnity of the regular wash.

SOUSE-CHEESE : brawn made of pig's face. From *souse*, to soak.

SPRING : a small wood ; a derived use of *spring*, *vb.* and *sb.*

STONE-HORSE (*stone-hoss, stonus*) : a stone-ware bottle for carrying beer. A monitory remark to the carrier is " moind that hoss, mite ; that kicks." Apparently an undoubted instance of that very rare thing, a rustic pun. See D.D. Stone-horse.

TARMIGAN : a termagant.

TIDY : in the phrase " half-tidy," pretty well in health. Cf. the Dictionary and p. 55, note.

TIFF : a fit of ill-temper. " He *was* in a tiff."

TIGHTLY. See **GO'-TIGHTLY**, above.

TOMMY : food carried to work. Hence **TOMMY-BAG**.

TO-NIGHT : last night. In literary use from the 13th century to the 17th. Shakspeare, *Romeo and Juliet*, I. iv. 50, " I dreamt a dreame to night."

TRADESMAN : a worker at a craft ; used of both man and master. Of a piece of work ill done it may be said " Ah, that's a bad tradesman."

WET (*sb.*) : rain. " Keep in out o' th' wet ; don't you'll git wrong." So of fallen rain, in puddles. See **SLAP**.

YELT : a young sow before bearing. ? *Geld, gelt*, of D.D.

YOUNG : short, of time. " A can't sim t' git through m' jobs nohow. Time is s' young."

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